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REMINISCENCES

Early Days In Battleford

AND

With Middleton's Column

BY

R. G. LAURIE, D.L.S.



Recollections of Incidents of Travel, Early Surveys,  
~~Poundmaker, Batoche in 1884~~ Fish Creek,  
Batoche, Frog Lake Massacre,  
Pursuit of Big Bear, etc.



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# Reminiscences By R. C. Laurie

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## Early Days In Battleford

AND

## With Middleton's Column

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### WHY I CAME TO BATTLEFORD

While I was at the Royal Military College, which I had attended from January, 1877, to December, 1880, I decided to be a railway engineer and qualified in the subjects that covered surveying and engineering. I arrived back in Winnipeg just before Christmas, 1880, a short time after the government had turned over the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway to a private company formed by Donald A. Smith (afterwards Lord Strathcona) and his associates. April found me walking alongside two covered ox-wagons, following the trail to the North-West Territories as topographer on Mr. Secretan, C.E.'s, survey party. The eastern boundary of the Territories was then some where east of Brandon.

Portage la Prairie was the end

of the track with a train every second day. As all the previous surveys made by the government leading towards the Saskatchewan valley and the Yellow Head Pass had been abandoned in favor of a direct line across the southern part of the Territories, the new survey was started from that town. One party having started work on the section between Portage la Prairie and the Assiniboine River, we passed them and crossed that river on May 1st, camping on the present site of the City of Brandon.

There was a cable ferry here and on the east bank there was a large freight shed used by the river steamers plying between Winnipeg and Fort Ellice. The place was known as McVicar's Landing.

Beginning on the west bank of

the river we surveyed a trial line as far as the Forks of the Trail, I think somewhere near Broadview. A third party had passed us and started work there. Other parties had begun work at Moose Jaw Creek, Swift Current Creek and other points so that the entire line about as far as Calgary was laid down on paper in one season. Having joined our survey to that of the next section, we returned to a point near Brandon and commenced location, working as far as Moose Jaw, then two unfinished log houses, the squatters having gone to Buffalo Lake to winter. Snow had been on the ground since our camp on Boggy Creek.

Returning to Winnipeg, I worked in the draughting office. The boom of 1881-2 was raging that winter and land surveyors were very busy. In February Geo. McPhillips, D.L.S., told me that at the last session of the Manitoba Legislature an Act had been passed whereby graduates of the Royal Military College could qualify as surveyors after only one year's apprenticeship instead of the usual three years and asked me to sign up with him. On consulting the Chief Engineer he saw the benefit of having one of his engineers who

could sign registration plans and consented to my taking a year's leave. By the following June, the boom having burst, we did not have much survey work to do. Just then A. Macdonald, afterwards the well-known wholesaler, returned from Battleford, where he had a store, to engage a surveyor to lay out a townsite where the business part of Battleford now stands. The site was then a bare piece of prairie, all the houses being south of the Battle River. By permission of Mr. McPhillips, I secured the job and arrived at Battleford on June 26th, 1882; little expecting that after more than half a century I would still be here.

Mr. Macdonald decided to have his Main Street laid out in prolongation of the Mounted Police mockade and he also said that if a crossing were ever put over the Saskatchewan it would be at the foot of the coulee. He drove a stake where a street at right angles to the street from the barracks passed down the hill south of where the town hall stands and directed Messrs Smart & Latimer to build his new store there. This was in the Galvin-Walston lumber yard, near the west end of the inclosure. The bridge over the Saskatchewan

was built twenty-seven years later at the point indicated by Mr. Macdonald.

Those living in the original town in 1878 petitioned the government to survey the townsite and in response A. G. Cavana, D.L.S., arrived Sept. 1st 1882. On his party was Geo. H. Clouston, who is still with us, and W. C. Gilchrist, who was killed in the Frog Lake massacre. There not being any survey lines run up to that time to give him a starting point he drove down a large iron post about two inches square and three or four feet long in such a position as would put Macdonald's old store on a corner lot. Setting his instrument over the post he laid down Central Avenue by observation and surveyed a town plot from the Battle River to a line passing south of Government house on top of the hill. This survey was registered as Battleford, but was afterwards re-named South Battleford. In April, 1882, a big flood came down the Battle River and covered the flats to such a

depth that the town had to be temporarily abandoned. The high water mark of this flood was used in 1884 to determine the height of the permanent bridge over the river.

On the completion of the survey of Mr. Macdonald's townsite so many lots were sold and houses erected that I had to lay out several more blocks during the winter. After doing a number of others private surveys including a timber limit at Turtle Lake for J. G. Oliver I returned to Winnipeg at the end of my year's apprenticeship and at the next annual examination I passed as a Manitoba Land Surveyor and two weeks later as a Dominion Land Surveyor. There not being any railway surveying being done at that time I applied to Ottawa for a sub-division contract and was given the job of carrying Mr. Cavana's survey of Battleford north until it reached the Saskatchewan River.

This brought me again to Battleford about the first of July, 1883.



## EARLY SURVEYS.

The first part of this article is not from my own recollections but it is the remembrance of what I have read. The earliest survey that I have seen any record of was made in 1794 by David Thompson who traversed the Saskatchewan River from Rocky Mountain House to Lake Winnipeg. His method was to take the compass bearing of each stretch of the river, noting the time at which he did so. He then floated down stream in his canoe until he reached the tree or other mark on which he had made his compass reading and noted the elapsed time. At noon he located his position by observation and calculated the distance he had travelled since the preceding noon. Knowing the number of hours he had been travelling during the twenty-four hours he translated the hours and minutes of travel of each course into distance. He found no trading post at the mouth of the Battle River but noted the ruins of Cole's House about nine miles further down the river on the north side.

After the surrender of Canada by the French their traders with-

drew from the Saskatchewan country but a number of their men who had intermarried with the natives remained at different points along the river, trapping and trading. These men would gather together at some rendezvous on the Saskatchewan and travel in a brigade of canoes to Montreal. Here they paid their debts and, selling the remainder of their fur, would have a big debauch as long as their money lasted. Then each obtained one or two canoe loads of goods from the merchants on credit and returned to the Saskatchewan for another winter's trapping and trading.

In the spring of 1870 the rendezvous was at Cole's House. Here considerable drinking was going on and one Indian became too much of a nuisance. Cole put some laudanum in his liquor to put him to sleep but, making the dose too strong, the man died. The other Indians killed Cole and burned his trading post. The others escaped by jumping into their canoes and setting off down the river, several having to abandon their winter's catch of fur. It was situated across the river from

the mouth of the Ten Mile Creek on the Saskatoon trail and what is believed to be the old cellar was found by Mr. Innes and some Collegiate students several years ago.

During the time the government C.P.R. was being surveyed a line of the system of subdivision was continued from Manitoba, following baselines with jogs northward along township meridians, where necessary to keep near the railway survey for the purpose of checking its location. The north boundary of Tp. 42 was surveyed into Battleford, passing on the top of the Battle River hill to the north of Government House and a half mile mound was near where the residence of the Principal of the Industrial School was afterwards built.

These lines were run in accordance with the system of subdivision being used in Manitoba where the road allowances are 99 feet in width on the four sides of each section. About 1880 the system was changed by narrowing all road allowances to 66 feet and eliminating every alternate east and west one. This lessened the width of each township by 198 feet and the depth by 396 feet. At Battleford it moved the

north boundary of Township 42 almost three and a quarter miles to the south.

The new system of survey reached Battleford in 1883, W. A. Ashe, running the north boundary of Tp. 44 and Proudfoot and McLean the township meridians for twelve miles north and south of the base line.

The surveys of Town of Battleford by Mr. Cavana and myself, previously referred to, were made before the outlines of the new system of survey reached this district.

In September, 1883, I received instructions from Ottawa to proceed to the Elbow of the Saskatchewan and subdivide Townships 39 and 40 in Ranges 9, 10 and 11. Taking my party that were finishing the townplot I crossed the river here and followed the general direction of the Saskatchewan south-easterly. At that time crossing the river was a slow process. On reaching the river it was necessary to unload everything from the rigs and take the wheels off the carts and buckboards, while wagons were taken to pieces. The horses were made to swim and everything else was taken across in skiffs. On the island the rigs were put together, loaded and driven across to the



other channel when the same process was repeated. This is what every rancher had to do when he came to town for supplies but the present generation grumble if they have to wait while a plank is being replaced on the bridge.

My outfit consisted of a buckboard, two or three carts and a boat which two men took down the river loaded with flour. I remember that while we were crossing the river I saw the frame of St. Vital's Church being raised. After a couple of days travel across the prairie without any trail I thought we should be far enough and was wondering how we were going to find a survey mound on the open prairie when a man was seen walking and found that he was one of the men from the boat. Having seen a surveyor's cutting in the timber along the river he had walked up to it to see if our tracks had crossed it. On reading the section number on a post we found that we were standing almost on the very line we were looking for—the west boundary of Range 11. The survey proceeded very quick-

ly, the chief difficulty being the river which crossed every one of the north and south lines. When all work on the north side of the river was completed we crossed everything to the south side. The river was so low that the men tied a long picket rope and the surveyor's chain together and stretched it across like a ferry cable and worked the boat backward and forward by hand through blocks of ice which had broken off the ice formed along the shores. The horses were left behind and all the outfit was pulled across the sandbar by hand and camp made on the river bank where it had to stay until the ice was strong enough to bring the horses across. The winter of 1883-84 was a very long, cold one and a great depth of snow on the ground quite a while before we were ready to come home, leaving a number of mounds to be built in the spring. These were the first townships in Battleford district that were subdivided into homesteads. Radisson and Borden are in these townships.

## CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

It was interesting to the old-timer to note the gradual changes in transportation and changes of route of travel consequent upon the filling up of the country. Sixty years ago the only means of reaching Bettleford was by driving from Winnipeg in a buckboard or walking beside a Red River cart, taking three to six weeks for the trip.

My first trip took place just seventy-five years ago this summer when my father, with his family, set out from Owen Sound to start the first newspaper in the Red River Settlement. How we travelled I have no recollection as I was then only two years old, but family history tells that owing to my mother's health, we were compelled to stop at Detroit. While there a letter came from Fort Garry saying that another printing office had arrived there and that there was not enough business for two offices. After working in Detroit a while we moved to Windsor where he started the first paper, *The Essex Record*. In the summer of 1869 he again set out for Fort Garry. After reaching St. Paul, Minn., he drove a yoke of oxen and

freight wagon from there to Winnipeg. The First Riel Rebellion breaking out, during which Riel issued a warrant for my father's arrest for printing the Queen's Proclamation to the inhabitants of the settlement, he with two others, Donald Codd and Tom Lusted, drove in December with a horse and jumper from Lower Fort Garry to St. Paul and arrived home for Christmas. The next summer he went by boat from Detroit to Prince Arthur's Landing, now Port Arthur, where, accompanied by my brother, he joined a party of refugees returning to Fort Garry. They made the trip over the Dawson Route in two birch bark canoes just behind the soldiers on their way to put down the Rebellion. After many portages they arrived at Rat Portage, now Kenora, ran down the Winnipeg River, crossed Lake Winnipeg and paddled up the Red River to Winnipeg, just exactly one month from the time of starting. My brother says he slept that night in Barber's windmill at Point Douglas.

The next year, 1871, the remainder of the family started for

Winnipeg and travelled by a variety of conveyances on the trip—ferry boat, lake steamer, stern wheel steamer, railway, stage coach and farmer's wagon. By ferry from Windsor to Detroit; rail to Grand Haven, Mich., steamboat across Lake Michigan, rail to La Cross, steamboat across the Mississippi, rail to St. Paul and St. Cloud (seventy miles from St. Paul), stage coach for three days to Fort Abercrombie, stopping overnight at Sauk Centre and Pomme de Terre; from Fort Abercrombie to Twenty-five Mile Point by wagon, as the river boat could not reach Abercrombie on account of low water; and the rest of the way on a stern wheel steamer.

In January, 1877, when I returned to Ontario to attend college the route was completely changed. A stage line with five changes of horses a day for three days ran from Winnipeg to Fargo, Dakota, then eastward to McGregor's Junction, twenty-six miles west of Duluth, thence south westerly back to St. Paul, and via Chicago and Detroit to Kingston.

In June, 1878, the route was by boat to Duluth and rail to Fisher's Landing, twelve miles up the Red Lake River from Grand

Forks, then by boat to Winnipeg.

In 1879 the rail portion was more direct and ended at the boundary line and then by boat down the Red River to Winnipeg. In the midsummer of 1880 the railway ran into St. Boniface and at Christmas, 1880, it landed its passengers in Winnipeg.

The railroad having reached Winnipeg transportation east from that city was easy. The long trips by trail to all parts of the Territories still remained but were gradually being shortened. In April, 1881, I was able to reach Portage la Prairie by rail and thence by road. Returning in the fall the end of the track was at Griswold, where I caught a construction train to Brandon, the end of the regular train service. In February, 1882, my father with two of my sisters left the railway at Brandon in sleighs and reached Battleford in April. In June, 1882, I was able to buy a ticket to Oak Lake station, then called Flat Creek, and then rode all night, with my mother and the rest of the family, for 80 miles in a box car on a construction train without any light and a team of horses as companions. Reaching the end of the track we took the mail stage to Battleford, arriving on the eleventh day from

Winnipeg. The mail was carried in an ordinary democrat and when we ran into a hail storm as we were coming around the Elbow we simply carried on and let it rain. The trail passed by Fort Qu'Appelle, Touchwood Hills, Humboldt and Duck Lake. At the latter place the trail to Prince Albert branched off. By February, 1883, the mail stage

connected with the railway at Qu'Appelle and in the spring a trail was laid out by Goodwin Marchand from Battleford to Swift Current which remained in use until 1890, when Saskatoon became Battleford's railway station. In 1905 train service was established to the siding on the north side of the Saskatchewan, afterwards called North Battleford.



## POUNDMAKER TROUBLE 1884

In 1884 for some months rumors had been heard of trouble with the Indians but nothing definite could be learned. About the middle of June the outbreak came with great suddenness and for a few days there was great anxiety in Battleford as to what the result would be.

Poundmaker's Indians were on a reserve on the south side of the Battle River, about 30 miles west of Battleford. Lucky Man's adjointed on the west and Little Pine's was further up the river but at this time Little Pine's men were on Lucky Man's reserve, intending to go on their own reserve the next week.

A "Thrust Dance", at which vows are paid and braves are made, was held at Poundmaker's

reserve and Indians from all parts of the country were gathered, including Big Bear's band from Pitt, and half-a-dozen Mounted Police had been sent up to watch that nothing out of the way occurred. On Tuesday, June 17th, two Indians went to the storehouse on Poundmaker's reserve and asked for rations. Now, there was an order that any Indian who quit his work to go to the dance could not draw his rations. One of the two men had been on the sick list and was given his supplies but as to the other Instructor Craig reported him to be an indolent and troublesome fellow. Craig promised him that, if he would work, he would feed him but not otherwise. He repeated his demand several times and was

always refused. As Craig wished to lock up, he ordered him out of the building. As he wouldn't go Craig gave him a shove where-upon the Indian took up an axe handle and struck Craig several times with it. Owing to the presence of 500 or more Indians the police corporal decided that it would be inadvisable to attempt to arrest the man with the few policeman that he had with him and sent word to Battleford, the messenger arriving during the night.

The following account of the events at the reserve is copied from the issue of the Saskatchewan Herald, dated June 28th, 1884, and was apparently written by William Laurie, who was present when the arrests were being made:—

On Wednesday morning, June 18th, Supt. Crozier, Insp. Astrobus and about thirty men left for the reserve, every available mount in the barracks being taken. Orders, however, were left for all horses in the neighborhood to be held in readiness at a moment's notice. Upon arriving at the reserve Supt. Crozier found the Indians gathered from all parts of the district for the purpose of holding their annual thirst dance and indulging in threats as to

what they would do in certain cases. He at once ordered the cattle and provisions to be removed from Lucky Man's reserve to that of Poundmaker, at which place he constructed bastions of logs, rendered bullet-proof by tiers of sacks of flour and oats. The horses were put in a corral behind the house, and earthworks thrown up to protect them. This work extended far into the night, but when completed presented a formidable appearance and could have been held for some time against considerable force.

Owing to the threatening attitude of the Indians a messenger was despatched to Battleford for additional men and ammunition, and early on Thursday morning Sergt.-Major Kirk left with thirty additional men on horses that had been collected from civilians. Notice was given that any women and children who so desired might be quartered in the barracks, and the rifles and ammunition of the Battleford Infantry were issued to volunteers, many of the members having left the limits.

The Indians, upon the arrival of the police, gathered in their horses, sent their women and children away, and hung out their medicine-bag, which, according to their customs, meant an open

declaration of war and an invitation to the red coats to "come on".

On Thursday, Major Crozier sent Samuel Ballendine, instructor on Strike-him-on-the-back's reserve, to the camp to explain the object of his visit and to ask if they intended to give up the prisoners. Upon receiving their reply, Major Crozier, unarmed and unaccompanied by any one save an interpreter, visited the camp and held a council with the chiefs. He explained to them that the men had been accused of a breach of the law, and that he had received orders for their arrest—orders which he had no choice but to obey—and asked that the prisoners be given up to him quietly. He promised them a fair trial and guaranteed that if they were innocent, as they claimed to be, they would be released. At first they were determined in their refusal to give up the men, but after some delay it was proposed by some of the Crees that the trial should be held in the Indian camp. To this Major Crozier assented, although he explained to them that he would prefer to hold it at the farm house, where he had his table and books and papers. Chief Poundmaker objected to holding the trial in the camp and expressed his prefer-

ence for going down to the instructor's house, because, as he was overheard by the interpreter to explain to the remainder, that should the police open fire on them, some of the women and children—who had returned during the forenoon—might be killed.

About 4 a.m. on Friday Major Crozier left the Indian camp, having received a promise from the Indians that they would come down at nine o'clock with the prisoners. As they did not come at the appointed time he again visited the camp and remained with them talking until between four and five o'clock that evening, at which time he had succeeded in inducing them to come to within a half-a-mile of the instructor's house. Here he left them and returned to the fortifications. Mr. Wm. McKay, of the Hudson's Bay Co., who had arrived in company with Mr. Gisborne, remained a short time after Major Crozier left, and reports that Poundmaker addressed the Indians and said in effect that as he found his men were unwilling to yield up the prisoner he would deliver himself up to the police, and left for the barracks in company with Big Bear and two or three other Indians.

Finding that farther negotiations were useless, Major Crozier, with Interpreter Laronde, Instructor Craig, and a few men on foot then marched up to where the Indians had taken up their position, having given orders before he left that the rest should come up immediately prepared for action. Mr. McKay also drove back and at Major Crozier's request interpreted between that officer and the principal man wanted. The Indian told his version of the story, which was to the effect that he had been unwell and wanted provisions for himself and a sick child, when Craig attempted to put him out of the house. The Indians now wanted to have matters dropped altogether. To this Major Crozier replied in the negative and ordered the man to give himself up. Mr. McKay interpreted this to him, and as Major Crozier stepped forward to arrest him he jumped back and attempted to escape, but four men were detailed to take him, which they succeeded in doing.

Now ensued a scene of the most indescribable confusion and uproar, many of the Indians crying out "now is the time to shoot", while others implored them to wait until the police fired

the first shot. The mounted men, who had arrived in the meantime, extended in rear of the party on foot and were ordered to dismount and cock carbines—a manoeuvre which caused the Indians to scatter. In the *mêlée* two policemen who belonged to the party on foot were overpowered and disarmed. Indeed, for a few minutes things looked very darkly, and it was nothing short of a miracle that prevented bloodshed, for had a rifle or a revolver gone off accidentally in the scuffle, there is no telling what might have been the result, as firing would undoubtedly become general, and war to the knife have been declared. The prisoner was safely lodged in the guardroom and placed under a strong guard, while sentries were posted on all sides of the fortified buildings. For some time after the arrest had been consummated the Indians appeared to be greatly excited and galloped about in all directions, shouting and flourishing their weapons. In the confusion which followed the arrest Interpreter Laronde was surrounded by the Indians and made a prisoner, but after it had been explained to them by himself and Mr. McKay that the part he had taken in the trouble was only to

the discharge of his duty they allowed him to go.

A quantity of flour and bacon was distributed among those Indians who were positively identified as having taken a stand favorable to the police, and while this was being given out Instructor Craig pointed out amongst the onlookers the Indian who had assisted the first prisoner in committing the assault. He was at once arrested and placed in the guardroom with his companion. Shortly after nine o'clock the police left with their prisoners for Battleford, where they arrived about 4.30 a.m. on Saturday, completely wearied out, many of them having been awake and on the move for fully forty-eight hours.

So far the story of the Poundmaker racket has been copied from the Herald dated June 28th, 1884. I now resume my recollections of what took place in the town and barracks during that anxious week.

On Tuesday, June 17th, the same day that Instructor Craig was assaulted by the Indian at Poundmaker Reserve Mr. Gow-anlock, who was in charge of a trading store for Mr. McCuang, of Medicine Hat, suggested that we take up homesteads along the

Battle River west from Battleford and the next morning we started out on horseback to make a choice. To our surprise we saw a large body of Mounted Police riding west on the trail up the Battle River. After our return to town we learned that there was some trouble at Poundmaker's but no particular anxiety was felt, but when police came around next morning about six o'clock with instructions that every horse and saddle in town be sent to the barracks at once, we began to realize that something serious was transpiring. Every police horse had been taken by the first detachment, as well as Dan Finlayson's teams that were delivering wood to the barracks on a contract. It was such hot weather that one of the team horses died of sunstroke on the way to the reserve. Every policeman, except three, were mounted and rode away, Corp. Diamond being left in charge and an invitation was given for some of young men to come into the barracks, which several of us did. That night a number of the ex-members of the recently disbanded Battleford Volunteer Company, under Capt. Scott, and other civilians turned out and mounted guard. The line of sentries extended from the bar-



racks to the Otton House on the north bank of the Battle River and thence across the bridge up to the Registry Office (the small brick building on the south bank of the river) and a mounted patrol was sent up the north side of the Battle River to occupy Bill Turner's house (Speers' Dairy). The Otton House was used as the guardroom and between reliefs we slept on the floor without any blankets or other bedding. I can remember Thomas Mahaffy, of Mahaffy & Chinkskul, slept on one side of me and Charlie Goun, afterwards killed at Frog Lake, was on the other side.

Several small parties had gone to the reserve to see what was the matter but none came back which added to the anxiety. Consequently on Friday afternoon, with a single rig that carried two and two saddle horses, four of us started for the reserve. The party consisted of Jack Finlayson, an ex-corporal in the police, Billy Cameron, later the author of the "War Trail of Big Bear"; J. A. Gowanlock and myself. We rode and drove alternately until we reached Devil Drum Creek, since changed to Drummond Creek, where we spelled for supper. While here two civilians, Jas. McVicar and "Peachie" Davis,

now of Calgary, returning from Poundmaker's passed us, saying that everything was all over and also that there was no use going on as there was nothing to eat. I suggested to them to tell those in charge of the guard at Battleford to take off the sentries, but instead of doing so they passed them on the gallop shouting that they had despatches from Major Crozier and caused so much excitement that when we arrived back, we found the sentries had been doubled instead of being taken off. We also found out later that if we had continued on to the reserve we possibly would have been there in time to have seen the arrests being made.

The settled portions of Poundmaker's and Lucky Man's reserves were quite a distance apart and the site of the Thirst Dance tent was between them, about four miles west of the Indian Department buildings on Poundmaker's reserve. There were a lot of food supplies at Lucky Man's which were brought down in ox wagons to Poundmaker's reserve by Instructor Craig and a few police who had an anxious time passing the Thirst Dance tent as a number of the younger men made a demonstration although the string of wagons was

diverted to circle around the Indians instead of following the trail which led through the encampment.

A story told after the police returned to town was about Major Crozier going alone with his interpreter to the Thurst Dance camp and negotiating with the Indians. Finding that he was not having any success he started back but stopped after going some distance and the Indians came to him for a further argument. He again left them going another stretch on the way to Poundmaker's when they again came to where he had stopped and in this way he led them the four miles to where his men were in the fortified building at Poundmaker's. It was then he took out the small detachment of police to make the arrest, followed later by the main body when the situation appeared to be getting dangerous. The late Const. Guthrie was with the first squad and was one of the four men detailed by Crozier to seize the principal man wanted, the other man being arrested later.

No word having been received from the scene of the trouble a party of three young men set out to follow the telegraph line, which ran westward between the rivers,

to the point where the line crossed the travelled trail from Poundmaker's to the village of Bresaylor. The three were Hugh Richardson, the telegraph operator, William Smart and William Laurie Richardson cut in on the wire and connected up his instruments but could not get Battleford. Following the line backwards they found at one place the wire tied down in a slough with willow withes. Returning to the temporary office, they found the line working and received important messages for Supt. Crozier. Although word had been sent from Battleford that they were going up to cut in on the telegraph line no message from the police had arrived at five o'clock in the afternoon. As the message for Supt. Crozier was very important it was decided that one should cross the Battle River and take the message to the camp.

My brother William was selected to go and as he could not swim Smart walked with him through the river which was breast deep. Arriving up at the buildings he was just in time to see the fracas with the Indians when the arrests were being made. Having delivered his despatches he was given others to take back. On this occasion

Const, Knight accompanied him through the river. The telegraph line having again gone out of order they hooked up and returned to Battleford, arriving there just as the police returned. And they were glad to get back as

they had taken neither food nor blankets with them.

And thus the Poundmaker Racket became another incident of life in the West, although it is believed by some persons that the Rebellion the next spring was plotted at this time.



## DESCRIPTION OF A THIRST DANCE

The following description of a Thirst Dance is taken from the *HERALD* of July 19, 1880, and is descriptive of a dance that took place on the south bank of the Battle River in the first week of July, 1880.

The Thirst Dance is one of the greatest of the Indian festivals and was celebrated here with a degree of vigor and earnestness that proved that the stoicism and powers of endurance of the untamed Indian are not so mythical as some would have us believe. Preparations were in progress for some days, and the preliminary arrangements having been satisfactorily completed, the more serious part of the proceedings were begun.

The acts to be performed were partly of a penitential and partly of a propitiatory character, and every one was marked by a high degree of solemnity. The place

selected was a beautiful spot on the bank of the Battle River, commanding a fine view of the Saskatchewan and of a wide extent of its fertile valley. The temple was circular in form, fifty feet in diameter, with walls six feet high, the roof springing from plates laid on posts planted in the ground at equal distances, and meeting on a pole about thirty feet high; the roof and sides being covered with leather tents.

The first duty was to procure a centre pole. Between thirty and forty warriors, each on horseback with his squaw behind him, set out for the woods in search of one, preceded by the medicine men and chiefs "making medicine" [hideous noises] to drive away the evil spirits. When a suitable tree was found it was approached with much firing of guns and "medicine" and cut down. The horsemen then rang-

ed themselves along side of it, each attaching his lariat to it, and dragged it to the place it was to be set up. The raising of the pole, as every other act connected with it, was accompanied by low incantations and much noise—invoking blessings and driving away evil spirits.

The tent erected, four little pews, with walls about four feet high, were built with green boughs—two to be devoted to the men and two to the women dancers. These were mostly young people who had, when in imminent danger of their lives, vowed to perform this service out of gratitude, and to invoke the blessings of long life and prosperity upon themselves or their friends. As is usual with the Indian, every ceremony takes the form of a dance—a motion which with him is simply a jerk of the body without any motion of the feet. The peculiarity of the present ceremonial is, that the dancers must neither eat, drink, nor sleep until it is over—a length of time varying from two to four days. On this occasion it was to be only for two days.

Everything being in readiness the dancers to the number of about twenty of each sex, took their places in their respective

pews. The bucks were gorgeous in paint, which had to do duty for clothing; and some of them were got up with an ingenuity of ugliness that would put a modern mountebank to the blush. The squaws, on the other hand, were dressed with more than ordinary taste.

At ten o'clock on Thursday night the ball opened. Music was furnished by an orchestra of half-a-dozen drums played upon by chiefs, chief musicians and head-men, being accompanied by a wild song, bearable only for the admirable time that marked it. The dancers began with vigor, apparently careless of the fact that they had more than "an all-day's job" before them. To add to the weirdness of the scene, each dancer was provided with a whistle made from the wing bone of a goose, ornamented with feathers and pigments of all colors. With every movement of the body the dancers piped a note, making a noise like a lake full of beaver or a pond full of toads. Hour after hour the monotonous movement was kept up, with but an occasional momentary rest, at the will of the drummers. These geotry, however, had an easier time of it, for there were several relays of them, and they could go

in and out at pleasure. Having got the dancers fairly started we will take a peep at some of the side shows.

The scene was varied a little from time to time as the singing was stopped long enough to let some wise man exhort the neophytes to practice [Indian] virtue, or for a warrior to recite his deeds of valor and bid his hearers emulate them.

There were also some acts of heavy tragedy performed. One man had a couple of wooden skewers thrust through the flesh on the shoulders. To these were attached the lines of a horse which the victim had to lead around the camp until the flesh gave way. But the surgical operator miscalculated either the toughness of the Indian flesh or the strength of the horse, for it would not break. After the victim had led his horse around the camp for a couple of hours the managers concluded to let him go and unloosed the horse.

At another time a young buck went in to win his spurs. A piece of wood was thrust through the flesh of each breast and by these he was fastened to a couple of lariats suspended from the roof-pole. He then began to dance around the tent as far as

the lines would allow him, often throwing his whole weight on the line in his endeavors to break loose. But he was too tough, and had to be released after several hours' exercise.

Another hero had four pegs put into him—two on his back and two in the back part of his arms—on which four guns were suspended. Having remained 'under arms' for the greater part of the

Many valuable offerings were made to propitiate the gods. Children for whom the blessings were desired were brought into the lodge to receive them; and as this is a religion from which they expect nothing for nothing, they brought in horses and other valuable presents, many giving all that they had. Grown people, too, aside from the dancers, gave freely of blankets and dress pieces. Afternoon he, too, was released.

to secure a share of the good things they desired. In their liberality and zeal they set an example worthy of imitation by many professing Christians.

The public was also favored by a party of Assiniboine warriors with a pantomimic illustration, or rather a sham fight, showing how they had attacked and killed three of the enemy. From the careless

way in which they handled their weapons it looked as if they might at any time have a fresh corpse on which to illustrate further proceedings.

One fine looking young buck attracted a good deal of attention. Pendent from the skin of an American lion which he wore gracefully over his shoulders were eight lariats, each representing ten horses that he had captured. He trod with the step of a king, and wore his honors with as much pride as did ever his white brother the jewel of an order of merit.

On Saturday afternoon one of the dancers "made medicine" for rain. A couple of hours afterwards the clouds gathered and a regular all day rain set in. This permitted the dance to be brought

to a close without discredit: the Great Spirit had accepted their services. Speaking of the incident afterwards the young man said he had made the medicine too strong—it brought too much water.

The dance over, feasting began; and here the curtain drops.

I remember my father telling me of one incident that transpired during the ceremony which he does not refer to in his description of the Thirst Dance. An Indian sat inside of the entrance with an iron bar on his shoulder which descended on the head of the first dog that put its nose in the tent. The dog was immediately boiled and eaten.

The next Dance was commercialized by charging white men an admission fee.



## THE FROG LAKE MASSACRE

Frog Lake, the scene of the massacre in 1885, was apparently one of the points selected for a centre for teaching the Indians farming when a number of farming instructors were sent from Eastern Canada in 1878, as an item in a *HERALD* of 1880, reports that Supt. Herchmer and

Sgt. "Bob" Wyld had ridden from Fort Pitt to Frog Lake to arrest an Indian that had made trouble for Mr. Delaney, the farming instructor. In 1884 the *HERALD* records that Thos. T. Quinn, who had been appointed Indian Agent, had come to Batdeford to secure a carpenter to

superintend the erection of the Agency buildings and had secured Charles Gouin, who had returned with him.

In the summer of 1884 the Indian Department advertised a bonus for any one who would build a grist mill at Frog Lake. Mr Gowanlock, who was managing a branch for Mr McCualg, of Medicine Hat, about the same time received instructions to close the store. Being a practical millwright, he suggested to me to go in with him and take up the proposition. After some correspondence the agreement was signed with the modification that instead of two run of stones we were to put in one run of stone and a saw mill.

Mr Gowanlock immediately started for Ontario to buy the machinery while I was to go to Frog Lake and make the necessary survey to locate a site for a water-mill.

Before we submitted an offer Gowanlock and Gilchrist, his clerk, had visited Frog Lake and looked into the feasibility of the proposition while I ended to the store business. They travelled with a very primitive outfit. They put a pole on my buckboard and hitched up a pony belonging to each, with ox cart col-

lars, rope for traces and lighter rope for driving lines. No back bands nor breeching. Gilchrist told me on his return that when they went down hills each reached out and took hold of the front wheels. The trip was one hundred and twenty-five miles each way.

With three men and the outfit loaded on two carts and the buckboard we set out, all walking. Needless to say the buckboard had reverted to being a single rig, with breeching harness.

We started by the trail south of the Saskatchewan but some delay having occurred we economized time by crossing the outfit in a skiff at Moosomin's reserve and proceeded by the trail on the north side, by way of Fort Pitt and Onion Lake. From the latter place I got a lift to Frog Lake, twenty one miles, leaving the outfit to follow. On the way one of the wheels of an old wooden cart collapsed and the men divided us load between the other cart and buckboard coming in with the two cart horses hitched tandem to the remaining cart.

There were two kinds of carts in use. One factory made with iron tires, axle arms and bushings while the other kind was home-made of wood only. Not even a

nail being used. Wm. Cummings, one of our old timers told me that when he lived in Manitoba he was a cart builder and that on Monday he and his hired man would set out for the woods and on Saturday night they would return with two carts. Their tools were an axe, a saw, an auger and chisel, the latter for making the mortices in the hubs for the spokes of the wheels.

An examination of the creek, a line of levels down stream from the lake, and a cross-section of the valley showed that by placing a dam where the south boundary of the Indian Reserve crossed Frog Lake it was feasible to raise the water on the lake by two feet.

We first built a house for the goods and the men as the weather was very cold. It was a story and a half with a roof of rails, thatched with hay and mud. The lower story had shelving along part of one side for some trading goods and a counter. The cook stove was set diagonally in a corner and a ladder gave access to the upper room where we all slept. We also had a long bench on which all sat and ate off the counter.

While working on the framework of the dam I received a let-

ter from Mr. Gowanlock that he would be bringing a wife back with him and to build him a house. All hands turned in at cutting and flattening logs and we soon had a small one story house up, getting squares from the reserve to do the necessary mudding and plastering.

When Mr. Gowanlock arrived with his wife, he also brought Mr. Wallisraft, a carpenter, and Wm. Gilchrist, with him. He had also made a contract with Harry Sayers at Bresaylor to freight the mill machinery from Swift Current to Frog Lake at seven cents a pound, with a penalty of one cent a pound if the machinery was not delivered by a certain date. When that date arrived without any word of where the freight might be it was considered that the freighters had lost out but just at dusk the string of sleighs was seen coming down the hill to the mill site. This was accomplished by hiring Isadore Pambrun at Fort Pitt to put on his outfit and lighten up the loads.

The party was now divided, Mr. Gowanlock was left to frame the mill timbers while I went with some of the men to the bush to cut the covering for the dam. This was made of spruce logs



flatted on two sides to six inches thickness, with J. B. Pouras, now living near Delmas, doing the broad-axe work, while I score hacked for him. After the logs were teamed to the mill site they were whipsawed into two heavy planks three inches thick at the edges, with the half round of the log for the top surface. The dam being finished it was covered with a thick layer of spruce boughs and gravel from a pit opened in the sidehill. All this was being done during a very cold winter and such material as was available had to be used.

At the gravel pit two men were loosening the gravel and shovelling it in piles convenient for loading the wagons and a friendly rivalry arose between them and the teamsters who tried to get back before the shovellers had loads ready for them. One particular instruction that had been given was that the overhanging sod and frozen earth should be kept chopped off as the excavation entered the sidehill but in the rush the men neglected to do so and kept on drawing the gravel out. One day a man named Rocheleau, from Duck Lake, was working under the overhang and his companion was just about to go under when he

heard a sound like a crack. He straightened up to see what had caused the noise but not seeing anything he stooped again to enter the hole when the frozen earth fell without touching him but so close that it took the shovel out of his hands and fell on Rocheleau. The men from the dam rushed up and cleared away the lumps and stones as speedily as possible but the man was found apparently dead. The body was carried up to the house while Rocheleau's brother, who had been driving one of the wagons, went to the Catholic Mission for the priest. The latter pronounced him dead and suggested that he take the body to the Mission as it was lying on the only bench we had and the meals would have to be cooked and eaten in the same small room. We were grateful for his suggestion as we had no other building except the stable. After a fire had been started in the graveyard to thaw the ground and a short service had been held in the church, the late John Pritchard, who was Indian Department interpreter at that time, gave a horse to the brother who took the body to Duck Lake for burial.

As the days became longer and the weather moderated good progress was made and we saw

visions of having the mill completed in time to earn the bonus. Owing to having worked through the winter the expenses had exceeded Mr Gowanlock's estimate and ready money began to run short, and I suggested that I go east and secure a survey contract to raise more money while Mr. Gowanlock proceeded with the erection of the frame of the mill. Accordingly I packed out from Frog Lake about the 8th of March and little did I dream that I was seeing the last of my friends and of the prosperous little settlement as on April 2nd all the white men were massacred and their buildings burned.

Arriving in Winnipeg on my way east on the day the troops were called out I went to the drill shed and volunteered and, in consequence of being a graduate of the Royal Military College, I was posted to a lieutenancy in F Company, 90th Winnipeg Rifles, and was on Gen. Middleton's Column throughout the campaign, arriving at Fort Pitt early in June. After everything was quiet I obtained leave to go to Frog Lake and look after our property, taking with me Malcolm Young, miller for Prince Bros., Battleford, who had joined the 90th after Gen. Middleton

had disbanded the Battleford Rifles in which Malcolm had been a sergeant. He traced the machinery all through and found nothing missing but the houses and any work done in connection with the mill building had been burned. The dam had apparently been completed and had filled with water, as at the very top of the dam the remains of a large fish could be seen entangled in the brush with which the dam had been covered. A leak had occurred near the centre of the dam and there being no one to look after it a large hole had been eaten through letting all the water away. The Indian Department a couple of years later took over the machinery and moved it to Onion Lake where a steam mill was built and used until about two years ago when it was moved to some other part of the country.

The bodies of Gulchrist, Dal and Williscraft were buried where they had fallen, when trying to escape, by Gen. Strange's men when they reached Frog Lake about six weeks later. The bodies of Gowanlock, Delaney and the two priests had been placed in the cellar of the church by Louis Goulet who started to gather the bodies together but was stopped by the Indians and the church

burned. When the cellar was cleared out by the volunteers the remains of the four bodies were found burned beyond recognition but each was identified by the piece of unburned cloth under the back. The bodies of Quinn and Goun were thrown into Johnny Pritchard's house and the building burned. Although the site of the building was cleared off no trace of either body was ever found. Later the Dominion government had Laurence Lovel, of Onion Lake, move all the bodies to a small plot which is surrounded by a fence and the graves marked with name boards. The two priests were moved to Onion Lake and, I believe, lie under the Mission Church at that place.

About the actual occurrences on the day of the massacre, April 2nd, I have no personal knowledge as I had left Frog Lake, according to Insp. Dicken's diary, who notes that I arrived at Fort Pitt on Mar. 4th and left for Battleford on Mar. 5th.

Insp. Dickens, a son of the writer, Charles Dickens, was the N.W.M.P. officer in charge of the police detachment at Fort Pitt and the small detachment at Frog Lake, twenty-five men in all. Corp. R. B. Sleight, afterwards killed at Cut Knife, and five con-

stables were at Frog Lake.

There were two trails from Fort Pitt to Frog Lake. One followed the general direction of the Saskatchewan River and crossed Frog Creek about two miles from the Agency. The other went almost north to Onion Lake, about eleven miles, the little settlement there being about a mile east of the Fourth Meridian. This trail then turned westerly, passed around the south end of Stoney Lake and through the Frog Lake reserve, crossing Frog Creek at the outlet of the lake and joining the Edmonton trail a short distance to the west.

The agency buildings were in a row along the north side of the latter trail, the most easterly building being the residence of Farming Instructor Delaney, a two story house. The remainder were the ordinary one story log buildings. The first was occupied by John Pritchard, agency interpreter, then the blacksmith shop of Henry Quinn, a nephew of the agent, Tom Quinn, and some storerooms. One of them had been fitted up as a barrack room and was occupied by the mounted police. The residence of the agent was set further back and a little to the east of Delaney's residence. The agency buildings

were not entirely completed as Charlie Gouin, with some Indians who could do carpentry work, were still working at them. Nearer the creek was the R. C. Mission, consisting of the church, the priest's residence and other mission buildings. Also, within a short distance, were the stores of the Hudson's Bay Company and of Geo. Dill. All of these buildings were burned by the Indians together with the houses at the mill site.

When I left Frog Lake about three weeks previously there was not a suspicion that any trouble was brewing but as news of Riel's agitation at Batoche and finally the result of the Duck Lake fight became known the Indians of Big Bear's band became more offensive in their actions. Big Bear's son, Masses, and Wandering Spirit, were the leaders of the malcontents. There being only six policemen among the hundreds of Indians Agent Quinn thought it better that they should return to Pitt as their presence was a source of irritation to the Indians. This they consented to do, previously warning the white folks of their danger and recommending them to leave also.

On the afternoon of April 1st

they met at Mr. Delaney's house and decided that about ten o'clock the two women Mrs. Gowanlock and Mrs. Delaney—would start down the trail and a bit later the men would follow, with the intention, if Indians should attack them, they would put up the best fight possible and try to save the women. The priests refused to leave their people as they did not believe any real danger existed. Before making final arrangements the advice of the government interpreter was asked and he, not realizing the gravity of the situation, said the agitation was all talk and that some flour and bacon would end the matter as it always had done in the past. The men, relying on this advice, decided to put off their departure until the morning.

That night Mr. and Mrs. Gowanlock and Gilchrist from the mill, and Dill, the trader, and Williscraft, a carpenter stopping with him, slept at Delaney's house; Tom Quinn, the agent; Henry Quinn, his nephew and village blacksmith, and Gouin, the carpenter working on the agency buildings, slept at Quinn's residence. The priests stayed at the Mission and Cameron at the H. B. C. store.

The next morning, April 2nd,

was a day known as "Holy Thursday" and I have reconstructed the events of that day as best I can from interviews and other sources. There may be some inaccuracies but in general the facts are fairly correct.

The Indians early in the morning took the horses from Delaney's stable and then aroused those in the house, and made them prisoners.

The prisoners were then taken to the church where the priests were conducting a service during which a party of Indians in their war paint entered the church and made a disturbance.

Cameron was aroused by Indians in war paint demanding ammunition and had no option but to give the small quantity that was in the store. Wandering Spirit directed him to go to the agency office where the Indians were demanding beef. Quinn finally promised them an ox. Cameron was now told to go to the church to join his friends who were already there. From the church the white men and women were directed to go to the camp, about half a mile away on the shore of the lake but the friendly Wood Crees, by various means, kept Cameron from accompanying the prisoners.

At the Agency Quinn was ordered also to go to the camp but refused. Wandering Spirit then shot him and Charlie Goun was shot immediately afterwards.

The Indians in charge of the prisoners, hearing the shots at the Agency began firing also. When Delanty fell Father Fafard went to him but was at once shot by a youth who had lived at the mission for several years. Gowenlock and Father Marchand were also killed here, but the other three men, Dill, Willcraft and Gracina, ran for the bush, hoping to get away but were followed up and shot. The two white women were seized by Indians and dragged to their camp but were ransomed by some of the half breeds and protected by them until rescued by the troops a couple of months later.

Henry Quinn was also near the Agency buildings when his uncle was killed and immediately made off, reaching Quinn's house where he hid in the attic. When the Indians missed him they started to look for him. When searching the house a friendly Cree found him in the attic and motioned him to keep still, calling out "there is no one here." The next night, with the assistance of another Indian, he got

Quinn away and started him on the road to Pitt, where he brought Insp. Dickens the first definite news of the massacre.

Farming Instructor Mann, with his family, arrived at Pitt from Onion Lake on Apr 3rd and reported that the Indians at Frog Lake had massacred all the whites. This was confirmed later in the day by Henry Quinn. Rev Mr Quinney and wife also arrived the same day from Onion Lake. Inspector Dickens had the police and civilians working every day at fortifying Fort Pitt—loop-holing buildings, building stockade and bastions and levelling buildings, and on April 11th began building a scow. On the 13th Henry Quinn, who had been sworn in as a special constable, and Consts Loasby and Cowan went on a scouting trip towards Frog Lake. They went by the river trail and when they arrived where they should have seen the village nothing was visible but the charred remains of the buildings. Some teepees could be seen near the lake but not much signs

of life. They started back to Pitt the next day by the same road but later crossed over to the road from Fort Pitt to Onion Lake on which they found many horse tracks. Quinn said that the Indians were ahead of them but could not get Cowan to believe it. As they rode towards the fort they suddenly came in sight of a big Indian camp. Thinking they could get past it they raced their horses but the Indians started firing. Cowan's horse was likely wounded, or for some other reason balked, and Cowan dismounted and ran towards the fort but was killed. Loasby was also wounded twice and, as he lay on the ground, Lone Man wriggled along in the grass with bullets from the fort pattering around him, and took Loasby's belts of ammunition and his revolver and crept away. Loasby suddenly rose to his feet and ran to the fort, where some of the police came to meet him while others made an opening in the wall of flour bags to let him in.



#### FORT PITT DURING THE REBELLION

The H. B. C. post at Fort Pitt is said to have been first established in 1831 as a kind of half-

way house between Fort Carlton and Fort Edmonton. It was used principally for a place to

make pemmican from the flesh of the buffalo that were killed on the prairie south of the Saskatchewan river. Not much fur was found in the neighborhood except beaver brought down from the north by the Wood Crees. In 1884, when I first saw the collection of houses called Fort Pitt, there was not any sign of a stockade although there must have been one originally as war parties of Blackfoot Indians came as far north as the Saskatchewan to fight with the Plain Crees. The Wood Crees further north were not at all warlike and in 1885 did not take part in murdering the whites although many of them were with the other Indians and finally when the Indians were retreating northward before the troops they told Big Bear and his followers to go away and leave them. The houses were of the usual neat log construction with cottage roofs. Some were occupied by the family of W. J. McLean in charge of the H. B. C. store, and others by the Mounted Police under Insp. Francis J. Dickens son of Charles Dickens, the novelist—who had a detachment of twenty five men, of whom six had been sent to Frog Lake in 1884. The police post had been established in Septem-

ber, 1883, on account of the threatening attitude of Big Bear's followers. Insp. Dickens had been District Superintendent of the Bengal Police in India, a position he relinquished to return to England on the death of his father. Later, having come to Canada, in November, 1874, he was appointed to be an Inspector in the North West Mounted Police and saw service at Swan River, at posts along the Saskatchewan and south to Forts Walsh and McLeod and finally back to the Saskatchewan at Battleford and Pitt. His experience in connection with the natives of India in the years following the Mutiny fitted him particularly well in handling the Indians.

In the winter of 1884 it was known that things were not all right among the Indians and couriers were passing between Battleford and Fort Pitt very frequently and it was a period of great anxiety.

Insp. Dickens, upon whom was the great responsibility of trying to keep the malcontents under control and, failing to do this, to protect the fifty or more whites scattered through the district, had a very anxious time and, after the massacre at Frog Lake, worked his men continuously to fortify

the buildings at Fort Pitt, and down the Saskatchewan by build-  
finally prepared for a retreat ing a snow.



## INSP. DICKENS' DIARY

Insp. Dickens' diary while at Fort Pitt was edited by Vernon Lachance and published as Bulletin No. 59 by the Dept. of History of Queen's University, Kingston, Ont. It gives a digest of the diary with a verbatim copy of the entries from March 4th to April 23rd, 1885. Insp. Dickens had apparently recorded the arrival and departure of every traveller, freighter or Indian passing Fort Pitt, the weather and the doings of the garrison. Take, for instance, Peter Ballendine, an employe of the Hudson's Bay Company who resigned in the spring of 1876 and was the first to take up land at Battleford with the intention of making it his home. During the winter of 1884-5 he acted as an Intelligence officer for the Police and Indian Department in connection with the agitation among the Indians. His visit to Big Bear to try and persuade the latter to select a reserve can be traced through the diary, as follows:—

Thursday, March 5th - Fine weather. Snow fell during night

John Pritchard and Henry Quinn arrived from Frog Lake en route to Battleford. D. L. S. Laurie left for Battleford. P. Ballendine arrived from Battleford. Malcolm Macdonald arrived from Battleford with freight for the Hudson's Bay Co.

Friday, March 6—P. Ballendine left for Frog Lake. Wells and Baker (freighters) returned to Battleford.

Saturday, March 14 — Fine weather. P. Ballendine arrived from Frog Lake and reports that Big Bear has promised to take a reserve 35 miles from Frog Lake on the Saskatchewan. Sayer's outfit of carts with seed grain for I. D. passed en route to Battleford.

Monday, March 16 Fine weather. Rev Chas. Quinney arrived from Onion Lake. C. Bremner arrived from Battle River from trading with the Saulteaux Indians. P. Ballendine with Big Bear's son left for Battleford. Rev. Chas. Quinney returned to Onion Lake.

Andre Nault, who was suspect-



ed to be a half-breed courier, is noted as follows:—

Monday, March 23 — Fine weather. Rev. Chas. Quinney returned home. (The previous day's entry notes that he arrived from Onion Lake and held service.) Indian Pa-too-way-sic-owin left for B'ford with despatch for O. C. B'ford. Sayers and Nault (half-breed freighters) arrived from B'ford. Rumours abroad to the effect that the Half-breeds are in arms against the Government.

Thursday, March 26 — Fine weather. Antoine Fontaine (messenger) arrived on horseback from B'ford with despatches. Const. Cowan and Guide Josie Alexander left on horseback on special service, returning in afternoon. Todd (trader) arrived from Frog Lake enroute to B'ford. Corp. Sleigh and Const. Anderson arrived from Frog Lake with Andre Nault suspected of being a courier for Riel.

Friday, March 27 — Antoine Fontaine left for B'ford with despatches. Andre Nault examined by Insp. Dickens, who dismissed him with caution. Ny wag-o-sis (Indian) arrived from Onion Lake with potatoes for detachment.

Saturday, March 28 — Fine weather. Slight fall of snow dur-

ing night. Corp. Sleigh and Andre Nault left for B'ford. Big Bear's son and Lucky Man's son arrived from B'ford. (Corp. Sleigh could only have gone part way to Battleford with Nault, probably to see that he did leave the district, as Sleigh was at Frog Lake on the 30th when the police left there and arrived at Pitt on the 31st. After the Rebellion Nault was put on trial but sufficient evidence could not be obtained and he was dismissed.)

March 30 — Insp. Dickens notes the arrival of despatches from B'ford and the departure of Const. Anderson for Frog Lake with a despatch. News brought of an engagement between the Police and Breeds at Carlton. Extra guards posted around the fort during the night.

April 2 — Const. Roby went to Onion Lake for lumber and returned with word that the Indians were very excited.

April 3 — Farming Instructor Mann and family arrived at 1 a.m. and reported that all the whites at Frog Lake had been massacred. Fatigue all night barricading Fort. Henry Quinn arrived from Frog Lake and confirmed reports that Indians had risen. Mr. Quinney and wife also arrived from Onion Lake.

Guide Josie Alexander sent to B'ford with despatch.

April 4 —John Longmore, also called Johnny Saskatchewan, arrived from B'ford with despatch and reported the whole country in Rebellion. Extra precautions to protect fort.

April 5—Stables levelled in afternoon.

April 6 — Severe snowstorm during night and morning. Flying sentries taken off and sentries posted inside at portholes. Henry Quinn sworn in as special constable.

April 8—Built stockade and bastion to command back of fort.

April 9 —Built bastion behind orderly room.

April 11 —Started to build scow.

April 13th — Consts. Cowan, Leasby and Quinn left to scout towards Frog Lake. Indians arrived from Frog Lake and sent letter demanding that police lay down their arms and leave the fort. Mr. McLean (H. B. C. officer) went to parley with Indians. Chief Little Poplar, who with nine teepees had arrived from Battleford on April 7th and camped south of the river and been supplied with provisions by the police, crossed over and went to assist Mr. McLean in parleying with the Indians.

On April 14th, while McLean was still parleying with the Indians, the three police scouts rode past the camp on their return to the fort. As previously mentioned, Cowan was killed and Leasby wounded, Quinn escaping. McLean and Francois Dufresne, who accompanied McLean, were kept as prisoners by the Indians who threatened to burn the fort that night unless the police left. All the whites and half breeds in Fort Pitt went to the Indian camp while the police launched the scow and, amid floating ice, made their perilous way across the river. The scow leaked badly and sometimes was nearly swamped. The police reached the shore at last and camped for the night but had a miserable time as it was so bitterly cold the men's wet clothes froze on them, many were frost-bitten.

Next morning, April 15th, they set out down the river, drifting with the ice. Insp. Dickens made a very brief note in his diary, "Very cold weather. Travelled." They camped on islands during the nights and momentarily, during the daytime, expected to be sniped from the bank. John Pambrun, a scout from Battleford, arrived opposite

Fort Pitt a day or two after the the police had left and could see that the buildings were vacant. From Little Poplar, who was camped on the north side of the river, he learned that the police had gone down the Saskatchewan in a scow. Returning to Battleford with his report, he was sent out again to search the river and locate the scow. This he did, finding it about forty-five miles from Battleford. On their arrival after six days' travel they were met at the steamboat landing and played into barracks by the police band. In this party were the late J. W. Carroll, of Battleford, and Larry O'Keefe, living in the Prongue district. About a fortnight later they accompanied Col. Otter to Cut Knife where Corp. Sleight was killed.

Henry Quinn's name is given in some lists as being one of the civilians who went from Fort Pitt to the Indian camp but it is not so. Quinn struck west into the bluffs when fired upon by the

Indians and afterwards turned towards the river. Dropping over the bank to the beach along the water's edge until he had the fort between himself and the Indian camp. When he came up the hill all the buildings were in darkness as the police were already across the river. He spent the night, which was exceedingly cold, in a little dugout in the bank of the river. I have been told on very good authority that the friendly Indian who assisted him in escaping from Frog Lake, followed his tracks from where he left the trail until he found him in the hole. He then took Quinn to the camp and announced that he had adopted him as his brother.

Inspector Dickens' deafness had increased so much that he left the police force early in 1886 intending to take a rest before taking up some other activity but died suddenly at Moline, Illinois, on June 11th, 1886, at the age of 41 years.



## FROG LAKE TO WINNIPEG

After this digression I will now return to events of which I had a personal knowledge.

On March 4th I left Frog Lake

with the intention of going to Ottawa, driving to Battleford in a one horse Indian sleigh, called a "jumper". These were entirely

home-made, without any iron being used in its construction. I travelled in company with John Pritchard, who was also going to Battleford. On arriving there I learned that J. S. Macdonald, a government telegraph operator, was leaving for Ottawa in a couple of days, travelling to Swift Current with his brother Robert whose business at that time was carrying passengers and express between Battleford and the railway station at Swift Current, a distance of nearly two hundred miles. Travelling as a passenger meant that you paid \$25.00 and were given a one-horse jumper to drive. The owner did the chores, such as rounding in the horses in the morning, making fires, etc., while each passenger hitched up and drove his own particular horse, and provided his own blankets and provisions. There was no bother putting up or taking down a tent as we slept in the open, there not being any houses along the road, except one at the foot of the Eagle Hills, about seven miles south of Battleford on Dewan & Tremond's cattle ranch, now Joy's farm.

It was a fine warm afternoon on March 13th when we started and the water was pouring down

the hill on the south side of the Battle River, but when we reached the prairie level the sleighing was better. We travelled as far as Dewan's ranch where we stopped for the night. Bernard Tremond, a tablet in whose memory is in St. George's Church, was killed by the Stony Indians on their way from their reserve to join Poundmaker, having killed their instructor, James Payne, before they started. T. Dewan and his wife were in Battleford attending church that day and had been persuaded by friends to stop over night. The next day took us past the Point of Bush, about fifteen miles from Battleford, and out into a forty mile open stretch of prairie. The road was excellent, not having been affected by the warm weather which had settled the snow very considerably on both sides. We camped where night evertook us, making our beds on the trail. Next morning, just as we had hitched up a black object appeared behind us on the trail. Waiting to ascertain what it was, it turned out to be a young Englishman named James Herrick, who had set out to walk to Swift Current and all the baggage he had was a couple of loaves of bread, a can of corn beef and a

short handled axe he had found by an old fire on his way through the reserve where he had stopped the previous night. In the summer of 1884 he had walked from the crossing of the Red Deer into Battleford.

We could not very well leave him behind and two men to one pony would be too heavy a load for one horse as we had to make the Sixty Mile Rush that night. McDonald offered to give him a lift if he would take his turn at running behind. Everyone being agreeable we set out, three driving and one jogging behind. The Indian ponies could cover quite a lot of ground in a day if not hurried, so that a man could easily keep up with them for a spell. We made the Bush all right and found Antoine Chataigne camped there, wintering Goodwin Marchand's horses, and camped near him.

As we were harnessing up next morning (March 16th) the snow became a dark smoky colour and the young half breeds working for Antoine were quite excited, pointing to the sun. I took an almanac from my pocket and showed them that there was to be an eclipse of the sun on the 16th of March. We found out later that Riel had prophesied

that if God set a sign in the sky on March 16th it would signify that he would be successful in his Rebellion.

We left Herrick as he was stiff after his run. The bush was about three-quarters of a mile wide where the trail went through and on the south of it was very little snow, but by going from one patch to another we reached Eagle Creek, about twenty-six miles, and camped for the night. We were now traversing a stretch of prairie where it was a hundred and ten miles to the next wood.

Eagle Creek had flooded to the level of the grass, had frozen over strong enough for a man to cross on foot and then had run off a little until there was a decided slope to the centre from both sides. In the morning Robert Macdonald chopped a passage across the creek a couple of feet wide. We tied a loop in the middle of a long rope throwing one end across to Bob. By placing the loop over a horse's head he was made to walk through the creek, the rope was then drawn back and the others made to go through the same way. The rope was then tied to a jumper and they were pulled across one at a time. The first went over all right, the ice was heard to crack as the

second went over and the third, which was mine, broke through but with all hands on the rope it was pulled out but not until valise, bedroll and a bag of biscuits were drowned. On the south side of the creek there was no snow and we had to walk to the South Saskatchewan, drawing the sleighs on the grass to reduce the friction.

We arrived at the river in the evening and found the ice still solid with some open water along both shore lines. A skiff could be seen on the south bank which Bob Macdonald decided he would get to help us in crossing our outfit. He picked up a poplar pole among the drift along the shore and went to a place where some stones showed out of the water. Stepping and jumping from one to another he got as close to the ice as possible and then using his pole as a vaulting pole he sprung across to the solid ice. Crossing the river he found that the strip of water was frozen over but not strong enough to carry a man walking. He lay down and drew himself by his hands. Reaching the skiff he broke the ice back to the centre ice, dragged the skiff across to the north side and poled it ashore. Crossing our dunnage in the boat

we got it all on the ice and then packed it across to the south side where we again used the boat to get to the shore. The horses, sleighs and harness were left where we had camped at night. Macdonald found an Indian camp and hired the man to take us into Swift Current in some Red River carts. This was the least pleasant part of the trip as there was nothing to sit on but the floor boards and there were no springs on the axles.

When we stopped for dinner the Indian enquired what was the news from the north. Bob, who was the most fluent at the Cree, told him that Riel was making some bad talk and that the police were going to arrest him. The Indian said, "they can't do that. Riel has a thousand soldiers at his back." Bob explained that the police were not the only soldiers the Queen had. That the people down east where as thick as the grass we were sitting on. After pondering this statement for some time the Indian replied, "That can't be true because they couldn't get enough to eat".

Arriving at Swift Current we met Frank Smart and one or two other Battleford people, who told us that the trouble had started at Duck Lake and that Indian

Agent Lash and others had been taken prisoners by the half-breeds.

John Macdonald and myself talked it over and decided that as there did not appear to be any trouble around Battleford we would continue our journey to Ottawa. We knew before we left Battleford that a detachment of police had started the same morning for Carlton. Up to that time there had been nothing but talk around Batoche.

Frank Smart had gone to Winnipeg in February, I think to buy for Mahaffy & Clinkskill by whom he was employed, in addition to his private business. He was now at Swift Current on his way home where he had been met by John Todd with a brigade of carts. The next morning as the C P R. train was pulling out for Winnipeg Smart and Todd could be seen with their string of carts going north on the Battleford trail. Meeting despatch riders, Const. Storer and Jas. Bird, from Battleford with news of the trouble in the north, Smart accompanied the messengers back to Swift Current having cached the goods off the trail and left Todd in charge, with instructions that if Todd did not hear from him in a certain number of days,

he was to come back to Swift Current.

Todd struck out for the railway without waiting the stipulated time and was captured by a party of Indians who found on him a bundle of freight way bills and were going to kill him on suspicion of being a government messenger with code telegrams. A friendly half-breed interceded for him and eventually assisted him to escape.

Storer, Bird, Frank Smart, Joe Heon and Bob Macdonald set out for Battleford on horseback and when near Battleford struck out to the West and, passing around the Indians, made their way safely into Battleford. Smart was killed shortly afterwards while riding on patrol. As the telegraph line east had been cut early in the outbreak, the police at Prince Albert were out of touch with the outer world and one group of despatch riders worked between Prince Albert and Battleford and others from Battleford to Swift Current. Storer and Bird were the first to cross the prairies, making the two hundred miles in forty eight hours without a change of horses. After the Rebellion Storer was promoted from constable to sergeant as a recognition of his ride.

## INCIDENTS OF WINTER TRAVEL

In giving the foregoing detailed account of the trip across the prairie from Battleford to Swift Current it is not intended to convey the idea that it was dangerous or in any way different from the incidents connected with travel in a country where there were neither settlers nor bridges. The next fall Superintendent Steele had occasion to cross the South Saskatchewan at the same place after the ice had closed the river so that the ferry had ceased running but was not yet strong enough to bear up the horses. Steele had his men build a road of straw across on the ice and then threw water on the straw until he had an ice road strong enough to carry his horses. A few years earlier a detachment of police had to cross the same river but further west. Their expedient was to take a wagon box and convert it into a canoe by tying their tarpaulin around it and ferrying their outfit across in it. Ex-Const. Colin Genge, a well-known man in the Macleod district, told me that on one occasion while on detachment he was sent for a doctor while the rivers in the south were in flood. He

was driving a light one-horse gig and, having to cross one of the rivers, he stripped off his clothes, tied them in a bundle and drove the outfit into the river and crossed with the horse swimming.

The question of carrying food on a winter trip when everything would freeze was solved by various expedients. If any of our family had occasion to make a trip my mother made a long narrow cotton bag and fill it with mashed potatoes which was put outside to freeze. By chopping off a piece two or three inches long the traveller had enough for a good meal. As mentioned before the substitute for bread was biscuits in which some sugar was mixed to prevent them freezing too hard. Wm Peterson, when visiting the fur trading posts of Mahaffy & Clinkskill, used to have his meat, potatoes and vegetables boiled at home, all mixed together and put through a meat grinder. When he arrived at a camping place his first act was to make a fire and put on a frying pan of snow and a chunk of his mixture. By the time he had unhooked his dogs he had a hot



drink of broth ready. Similarly Luke Kelly, while driving the mail between here and Duck Lake, which required sleeping out for three nights on each trip, carried a package of ground ginger. He also built a fire and put on snow to melt. After attending to his horses he sprinkled ginger in the hot water which he said was better than any drink of liquor to keep him warm.

On three occasions I have slept in a hole in the snow where night overtook us and it was warmer than in a tent. One time it was while travelling on the mail rig from Saskatoon. The driver, who was too young for the job, made a late start from Saskatoon and he also used to go to sleep while driving. At one place the wind had blown some snow across the beaten trail, which I could see further ahead. The driver was asleep and happened to wake up just then. The horses were following the road alright but the driver never looked around to locate himself. He swung the horses off at a right angle, whipped them into a gallop and headed south. After he calmed down I told him he was on the trail when he turned off. Instead of following his track back to the road he turned in the general di-

rection of the mail station and practically travelled parallel to the trail. The snow was so deep the horses could only walk. We plodded along until evening and pulled up alongside a bluff where we could get some firewood. The horses were tied to two trees, without either hay or oats. After supper we dug a hole in the snow, lined the bottom and sides with the sleigh robes and made down my blankets. When we were settled down for the night we pulled the robes on the sides of the hole on top of us. I slept so warm and sound that when I looked out it was broad daylight. Getting up we found that the horses had got even with us as the length of the halter ropes had allowed them to get at the grab box which now contained nothing but a piece of uncooked beef, all the bread, butter, sugar, etc., having disappeared. There was nothing for us to do but hook up and go on. We eventually found the trail a couple of miles from the mail station which we reached shortly before dinner. The senior mail driver happened to be at the station on his trip east and would not let my driver go on as it was not fair to the horses to try to make the next station before night. On another occasion Mac-

farlanes, at Baljennie, heard a noise outside their ranch house. Going out to investigate they found that the horses had brought

the mail rig to their door with the driver curled up asleep on the bottom of the sleigh covered with the robes.



## WITH MIDDLETON'S COLUMN

### WINNIPEG TO QU'APPELLS

I do not propose to give a detailed account of the campaign of Gen. Middleton's column in 1885 as several histories of the Rebellion were published many years ago when the events were fresh in the minds of the authors and when they had access to documents and reports for verification of facts and dates, but to relate a number of incidents with which I was connected during that summer.

One of the first things that John S. Macdonald and I did on arriving in Winnipeg after our trip from Battleford was to visit a barber shop. While there we heard talk about the trouble in Saskatchewan and surmises as to whether troops would be sent. One man replied that the soldiers were already called out and were then in the drill shed. On leaving the shop I told Macdonald that I would go to the Free Press office, where I was well acquaint-

ed, and get the facts and there I learned that the trouble had become so serious that the 90th Winnipeg Rifles and the Winnipeg Field Battery had already been called out. I at once went to the drill shed and reported to the military authorities that I was a graduate of the Royal Military College and was available for duty. I waited around for a day or two but nothing came my way as I was a stranger to all the O. C.'s. Finally Capt. Geo. H. Young, of the Winnipeg Field Battery, whom I had known since 1871 and who had been sergeant-major and then lieutenant in the Field Battery when I did two annual drills with it before I went to the R. M. C., introduced me to Major McKeand, acting O. C. of the 90th Batt., Lt.-Col. W. N. Kennedy being in Egypt with the Nile Voyageurs. He promised me a commission in the regiment, if they received orders to go on active service. I was then

taken to Capt. Clarke of the "F" Company (the Scotch Company) who was told the same, that I would go with his company if . . . Capt. Clarke's only question was "were you born in Scotland". I replied, "no, but my father was", which was a satisfactory qualification to be permitted to join "F" Company.

At this time the regiment was parading every morning and sitting around the drill shed waiting for orders until noon when they were dismissed, to come back as soon as they had dinner. The same at supper time and about 10 o'clock at night. In the meantime Gen. Middleton had arrived from Ottawa. On the evening of March 26th we were dismissed with instructions that if orders were received from Ottawa the fire bells would ring and the buglers would blow the Assembly. Going to my hotel I met another ex-R.M.C cadet who was passing through Winnipeg and sat talking with him, when in a short time the bugles began to blow. I waited to hear the fire-bell but as they did not ring we decided it was only some of the boys practicing. Sometime later the hotel porter passed through the rotunda in uniform and, in answer to a question, said one

hundred of us go to-morrow morning and the remainder in the evening. I immediately went to the drill shed and reported to Capt. Clarke who was going in command of the advance party. He told me to wait and come with the remainder of the battalion. Consequently we pulled out for Qu'Appelle on the afternoon of March 27th. The fight between the police and half breed had taken place on the 26th but we didn't know it for sure although there were rumors that there had been some trouble.

The 90th Battalion was composed of six companies of forty men, besides officers, non-commissioned officers, headquarters and band so that their marching out strength was three hundred and three. Each man was issued a Snyder rifle and sword bayonet, tunic, trousers, Glengarry forage cap, canteen, belt and knapsack. The latter were of the old square pattern that were carried on the back of the shoulders by two straps passing under the arms. These had been gathered up from militia battalions in Ontario and Quebec to outfit the Wolseley expedition to Red River in 1870 and the stitching was so rotten that some fell off the men's backs while marching

to the railway station. The men had to supply their own shoes, stockings, under clothes, towels, etc., and were paid fifty cents a day, although after their return they received a grant of \$3 50 for their footwear.

On arriving at Qu'Appelle the men were quartered in the government emigration building, which had not been constructed for winter occupation, and the officers secured permission to use a vacant residence in which there were a few pieces of furniture as a stove, a table and one or two chairs. Gen. Middleton and his staff were at the hotel. The Winnipeg Field Battery was the only other unit to arrive at Qu'Appelle before the march to Batoche started. Capt. Swinford, Quarter-master of the 90th, was made Quarter-master at the Base and transportation for the Column had to be assembled and organized.

One of the amusing incidents that occurred here was in connection with a night alarm. Gen. Middleton had announced that some night during the week after he had arrived an alarm would be given, the rally point for the troops to be in front of the hotel. The last night of the specified week having arrived without any

alarm the officers expected that this must be the night, and went to bed prepared for a quick turn-out as we were about a block from the emigration building. Towards midnight the Chief of Staff came in and called for the officers of the left half battalion (D, E and F companies) and told us that we were to proceed to Fort Qu'Appelle at daylight. We again laid down on our blankets, which were spread on the floor. At half-past one an orderly came with a message that the officers of the left half battalion were wanted at the orderly room at once. When we arrived there and lined up before the O.C. we received identically the same order the Chief of Staff had given us, about leaving at daylight, which had now been given to us through the proper channel of communication. Returning to our quarters we decided that there would not be an alarm now and went to bed properly. I know, for one, that I undressed this time. Before morning the alarm did sound and there was a great bustle trying to dress in the dark until the lamp was lit. By the time we doubled down to the barracks the regiment had fallen in, and jumping into our places we marched to the hotel where the

General came out on the balcony and was apparently much surprised to see us.

There had been a rumor that one morning moccasin tracks had been found behind the barn in which the horses of the field battery were stabled and that burnt matches were found in a manger below a knot hole in the wall. This night it appears that a man was seen going into the willows near the men's quarters. This being thought suspicious the sergeant-major followed him. The officer in charge of the picket guarding the freight sheds saw the two men going into the willows, extended his men and started to investigate. The sentry on the men's quarters saw a line of skirmishers apparently advancing to the attack turned out his guard and the bugler sounded the alarm.

#### QU'APPELLE TO BATOCHE

In the morning the left half battalion paraded and were loaded into a string of sleighs, the roads being quite icy and no sign of a thaw. Arriving at Fort Qu'Appelle we crossed to the north side of the river and pitched camp at the foot of the hill where there was a spot of bare ground. Here we remained for a week or so before the remaining companies arrived.

The left half battalion was shortly afterwards joined by the remainder of the regiment which included Headquarters and the band as well as "A", "B" and "C" companies. These arrived in wagons. Ammunition was issued and there was rifle practice at wooden targets, following which there was much controversy between "C" and "F" as to which was the best shooting company. Capt. Clarke, in peacetime would only accept men who were good shots as members of his company. Colson Mitchell, who made a continuous string of visits to England as a member of the Wimbledon team was colour sergeant. Capt. Clarke before leaving Scotland had been Captain of the Scotch team at Wimbledon one year. "F" company were instructed to fire low and cut the board in the target just below the bull's-eye completely out of the target while "C" had fired at the bull's-eye. They afterwards counted the bulls on the various targets and claimed to be the best shooting company as it had the most hits. Jack Curry, who spent so many years in Battleford and North Battleford, before going to Vancouver where he died, was a private in "C" company and we had several ar-

guments on this question without either being converted to the other's opinion

In addition to the 90th Battalion at Fort Qu'Appelle were the Winnipeg Field Battery with two guns and French's Scouts. These units were the nucleus of General Middleton's column which marched out of Fort Qu'Appelle on April 6th and were joined at intervals by other units. So that on its arrival at Clarke's Crossing the column included also Boulton's Scouts, "A" Battery with two guns, half company of "C" School of Infantry and the Royal Grenadiers, from Toronto.

A large transport train was organized of every available team that could be secured. There were even large flat trucks of the Cartage Co. from Winnipeg. I believe that 1600 pounds was a load and it looked comical to see the big trucks with the small pile of boxes that was their quota. They were divided into subdivisions of ten teams, each under a head teamster. At the end of the first day's march the teamsters formed up very regimentally, when the leading team took up its position the following nine moved out in succession to the left and formed up in line with number one, each succeeding ten teams doing the

same. I do not know how long they kept up this formation as later, I believe, they sometimes formed in a hollow square. As each day's ration of hay, oats, corned beef and hard tack was issued the loads were re-arranged and as many empty teams as possible sent back to the base. The rate of pay for each team was \$10.00 a day and after the close of the Rebellion when the volunteers were given a scrip the application of the transport drivers for one also was refused. The volunteer had plugged along on foot through snow, mud and water, for fifty cents a day while the driver sat in his wagon and rode all day for ten dollars.

As already stated we started on the long trek on April 6th. Our camp having been on the north side of the Qu'Appelle valley we had all the advantage of the sun and had bare ground for the camp site, but as we wound up the long coulee to the prairie land we had considerable mud and running water to wade through. Arriving on the prairie level we found the country still covered with the last of the winter's snow which was still a few inches deep and saturated with water, with occasional stretches of bare grass. Through this mushy snow the men plodded

all day, their civilian footwear soon becoming soaked through.

When leaving Winnipeg the men were issued with a tunic, trousers, greatcoat, rifle, belt, two ball pouches and an empty knapsack. We wore fur caps at first but at Humboldt they were sent back and the battalion issued a Glengarry as a forage cap.

Tuesday and Wednesday, April 7th and 8th, were similar days—weather warm, with snow and slush under foot—except that on the latter day we camped at noon. I thought that it was to give the men a rest and to allow the Royal Grenadiers, from Toronto, to catch up, as they arrived in wagons during the afternoon, but another historian says the several halts were to allow the transport to catch up with supplies as owing to the frost going out the trails had become almost impassable.

Another two and a half days of marching brought us to Humboldt, the junction of the new telegraph line which had been built from Qu'Appelle to connect with the original line from Winnipeg which had to be abandoned on account of it having been built through a muskeg, and was out of commission for months at a time,

Humboldt consisted of two log shacks, one the telegraph office and the other the stopping place for the stage. The latter was now being used as a storehouse by the freighters who had been caught on the trail at the outbreak of the Rebellion. A good trade was carried on with the soldiers in the way of canteens, socks and other necessities.

The column was equipped with one ambulance which was used as an office by Slack Wood, the telegraph operator. At each camp ground he climbed on the roof and cut in, the general thus keeping in touch with the government and his other columns of troops. Touch with the wire was lost at Clarke's Crossing, as the line branching off to Prince Albert was on the west side of the South Saskatchewan, and further communications from Fish Creek and Batoche had to be carried by some of the scouts to Clarke's Crossing office which was also west of the river.

I do not remember when we saw the last snow but it was all gone before we struck the Big Salt Plain. The creeks had cut a channel down the centre while the ice was still solid along both sides. The soldiers walked out on the ice, took one or two steps in

the ice cold water and then up on the ice again.

The Big Salt Plain was a big marshy flat of alkaline clay as far as the eye could see and was estimated to be about thirty miles across. Now that the frost was coming out of the ground the transport wagons sank to the hubs and the soldiers had very poor footing. The mail contractor had a small building about the middle of the plain for a stopping place for the stage drivers and passengers. On one trip I made the eastbound and westbound mails met at this station and at night everyone slept on the floor and were packed so tight that nobody could turn over until morning. There were two men living in the building when we arrived who did a good business selling fresh made biscuits to the men at twenty-five cents a dozen. As there was no wood to be had on the plain it had to be carried by everybody who travelled the trail, consequently the troops had no way to dry their clothes or shoes that night. About the time we arrived at the camping ground it began to rain. That night I slept in my wet clothes because I was not going to put on the cold, wet garments in the morning.

Gen. Middleton sat on his horse by the side of the trail just before we reached the end of our day's march and watch the men pass. Just before the 90th reached him some one started up a song in which all joined and picked up the step and their alignment. Just as the leading files reached the general the regiment was called to attention and marched past him in fine style before they lost the swing of the song. "F" company being at the rear I heard Gen. Middleton say, "Well marched, Ninetieth."

Our next stop was Humboldt on our sixth day from Qu'Appelle. We were now on fine dry prairie, the trail running among scattered poplar bluffs and we were making good time. We went in to camp at noon and had another half day's rest. We were joined here by a half company of "C" School of Infantry, about forty men with two officers (Major Smith and Lieut. Scott). Also a board of officers sat on some ammunition which had been brought over the Dawson Route by the Wolseley expedition fifteen years before. The powder from some of the cartridges fell on the ground a few feet from the muzzle of the rifle and burned like a lump of charcoal.



## FORT QU'APPELLE TO CLARKE'S CROSSING,

Leaving Humboldt our next objective was Clarke's Crossing which we reached in about four days over a good prairie trail. This point was east of Warman and about eight miles north of the present siding of Clarke's Crossing on the Saskatoon-Prince Albert line. The manner in which the old-time names have been moved around by railway companies and post office officials is making it very confusing to tourists wishing to visit the old sites. In addition to moving the name Clarke's Crossing from where one of the original homesteaders had a ferry across the South Saskatchewan near his home, the railway station named Frenchman's Butte is six miles from where the fight with the Indians took place and the post office called Fort Pitt is four miles from the site of the old Fort Pitt. Clarke's farm house was the first we saw after leaving Fort Qu'Appelle.

The only outstanding incidents on this part of the trail were the arrival of Boulton's Horse, the posting of the first outlying picket and the strong head wind that blew on the last day of the march. C. J. Johnson, who has lived for many years about four

miles south of Battleford, was a member of Boulton's Scouts.

One evening after we had completed our day's march of twenty miles and a bit the adjutant came to the officers' tents and told us that Gen. Middleton had given instructions that an outlying picket was to be mounted that night. He said that if he had known in time he would have detailed the men for picket in time to ride on the wagons. The men for regimental camp guard rode on the wagons during the afternoon before and the morning after going on guard. At noon they returned to the ranks and the new guard went back to the wagons. The adjutant ended by saying, "Laurie, as you are the toughest, you had better take it". After our usual supper of canned beef and hard tack we were marched a considerable distance in front of the camp and a long line of double sentries posted. In addition I was instructed to patrol half a mile in front to see that the Indians were not gathering among the bluffs of trees to rush the camp. Being the first night the general said the guard could have a fire but not any other night. After each

change of sentries I took those who had been relieved and patrolled for fifteen minutes to half an hour in the country beyond without finding any Indians. The country was rolling prairie with small ridges and hills and every time I came on top of one I took a look for the fire. In consequence, although it was a very dark night, I was able to successfully return to the line of sentries. On one patrol I saw a man against the sky-line and shouted "Why are you not challenging, sentry?" His reply was, "Please,

sir, I'm one of your patrol that got lost". The soldier in front of him had knocked off the man's forage cap with his rifle and by the time he groped around and found it the patrol was out of sight. The next day "F" company had the advance guard and I took my place but before the day was over I was so drowsy that I would go to sleep while walking and had to go back to the wagons for a sleep, the only time I rode on a wagon between Fort Qu'Appelle and Prince Albert.



#### CLARKE'S CROSSING TO FISH CREEK

When we arrived at Clarke's Crossing on April 17th the ice in the South Saskatchewan had run out although huge blocks of ice lodged both banks of the river. The weather was comparatively mild and no snow had been seen for over a week but the wind blew very strong at times, especially the day we arrived and once later when I was in charge of the outlying picquet which that night was composed of "C" School of Infantry. This unit was composed of forty men under a major and one lieutenant. As they had twenty men and one officer detailed for duty every third night

it became very strenuous on the lieutenant, in addition to his company duties, and it was to give him a rest that I was detailed that night. The wind was very cold and blew like a little hurricane. We were absolutely without shelter of any kind, so that after relieving sentries and making the usual patrols there was nothing to do but lay flat on the ground and let the wind blow over us. The patrols were not as extended as formerly as we now had mounted men further out. The latter did not have uniforms and the trooper on our face of the camp was afraid of being

fired at for a half-breed and rode in to show that he had a white arm band on one arm, and said that any time he passed he would ride so that that arm would be next to the sentry.

While at Clarke's Crossing General Middleton divided his column, sending French's Scouts, the Winnipeg Field Battery with two guns and the Toronto Royal Grenadiers across to the west side of the Saskatchewan under command of Col. Strachan, with Lord Melgund, afterwards Earl Minto, as Chief of Staff. This left Boulton's Scouts, "A" Battery with two guns, half company of "C" School of Infantry and 90th Winnipeg Rifles on the east side of the river under command of Gen. Middleton with Lt. Col. Houghton as Chief of Staff. The scow of the Clarke's Crossing ferry, with the wire ferry cable coiled on it, was barricaded with baled hay and manned by Capt. Andrews, the Saskatoon ferryman, floated down the river between the two columns when the march on Batoche commenced.

On April 23rd the two columns set out and marched eighteen miles, the one on the east camp ing at McIntosh's farm. A detachment, under Capt. Clarke of "F" Co., went out during the

night to a farm where it was known that there was a quantity of oats and brought in several loads for the use of the mounted men and the transport.

This night I was detailed to take charge of the rear guard which was the best assignment I had so far. There was the butt of a haystack alongside a stable so that when not out as sentries the men had a soft bed sheltered from the wind and all the sentries in view. The only incidents during the night were the visits of General Middleton as "Grand Rounds" and Col. Boulton as "Visiting Rounds".

Next morning "F" Co. had the advance guard, which set out in the formation as laid down in the drill books of fifty years ago. First was the regimental sergeant-major with four men, followed at intervals of about two hundred yards by a connecting file of two men, the remainder of the right half company commanded by the senior lieutenant, then another connecting file followed by the left half company with the captain and the other lieutenant, which was myself. Boulton's men were in the lead and had connecting files extended to the river where they kept in touch with French's men on the other side.

## THE FISH CREEK FIGHT.

After a comparatively short march we were halted and allowed to lay down. During this interval a big Scotchman named MacPherson came to me to enquire what a man's sensations were when he went under fire for the first time. I replied that I had not the faintest idea as I had not had that experience. He said, "I came to tell you that I might run away". In about fifteen minutes he found out what it was like. Not only he didn't run away but, after our arrival at Fort Pitt, when volunteers were called for from each company to make up a detachment to accompany Gen. Middleton into the bush after Big Bear, he was one who volunteered, and reached as far north as any of Middleton's foot soldiers went.

When the column moved off again we only had marched a few minutes when we heard a single shot, followed by another, and then by continuous firing. Saddled horses came galloping back and, circling on the prairie, caused us to think that if those saddles had been emptied by the first volley Boulton's men must have been almost wiped out. We learned later that when the

mounted men rode out into the open they found about one hundred and fifty half-breeds who were not in their pits. Col. Boulton's command was to dismount and let the horses go. We kept plodding along towards the sound of the shooting when Capt. Wise, an A.D.C. of Gen. Middleton, came riding back from the front. Capt. Clarke asked him what the orders were. He replied that he did not know but that we had better double up to the assistance of the others, which we did.

Fish Creek is a small stream flowing through a very deep coulee, meandering from side to side of the valley. Where it came close to one side the hill became a cut bank covered with willow, poplar and Balm of Gilead, while between the bends the ground sloped gently down to the opposite side of the valley. The trail we were following descended one of these grassy slopes with a cut-bank in close proximity. The half-breeds had their rifle pits in the timber in this bend and apparently expected to ambush the troops as they marched down the hill but the extended formation would have prevented this even

if they had not been out of their pits when the scouts saw them.

Of the actual fighting I cannot give a report as a soldier only sees the small area around him. When "F" Company, the advance guard, doubled up, we extended behind a fringe of tall but slim willows that formed the south boundary of a small piece of prairie that extended to the top of the south bank of the creek. It was not much protection but fortunately the enemy was firing high and clipping off the leaves over our heads. Our first rush was about half way across the little prairie where we laid down in a patch of small underbrush and rosebushes. Here we were under four lines of fire—from the top of the south bank of the coulee, from behind rail fences, haystacks and buildings on the prairie level north of the ravine, from a poplar bluff on our left, and from the bank of the creek which curved southerly and from bluffs on our right. The fire from the left was the worst as it enfiladed the company. Capt. Clarke jumped up and called for five or six men to come with him but as he was facing to the left a bullet from in front struck him in the side and followed the ribs around until it hit the spine.

I saw "C" School of Infantry come up and extend facing east on our right and also some of the 90th passing to the rear of the bluff on our left. Thus stopped the cross fire and our next rush took us to the top of the bank where we laid until evening, looking down into the creek. This was all I saw of the Fish Creek fight.

The most of the casualties along here were hit in the forehead by the half-breeds who were lower down and had only the men's heads to shoot at. The man lying on my right turned and said, "See what I have got". A bullet had struck low and threw gravel in his face, one piece cutting his cheek from which the blood was running down. He calmly turned back and went on with his firing.

In the meantime the remainder of the 90th and the other units were more actively engaged in different parts of the field. Some companies of the 90th worked around to the left front far enough to attempt to charge the pits from the rear but after crossing the creek had to abandon the scheme owing to it being found impossible to get through the tangled mass of willow in the creek bottom. "A" Battery also took up

a position to the rear of the pits and were firing into them but were called back after a few rounds for some reason. It may have been because they were exposing themselves to an attack from their rear or because they were firing in the direction of the soldiers lining the top of the hill.

At the sound of the engagement the Royal Grenadiers on the west of the river were ordered to cross over. Their only means of doing so was by the scow that had been floated down as we marched from Clarke's Crossing. With improvised sweeps about one Company was brought over at a time and went into action on the left flank where the principal fighting took place after the first rush to the top of the creek bank. They left their overcoats behind them and, a drizzling rain having set in, they had a miserable time, particularly as they were left out on picket duty after the 90th went to their tents at seven o'clock. In the late afternoon a large party of men with two officers, of whom I was one, were detailed to proceed to a piece of prairie nearer the river and pitch the tents and the cooks began to prepare supper, as usual, hard tack and canned beef. The men found it very acceptable as it was

the first food they had since breakfast at McIntosh's farm.

At midnight the 90th were roused to go out and relieve the Grenadiers. By this time the rain had turned to snow and there was no sitting down until morning. The Grenadiers slept the rest of the night in the tents and blankets of the 90th battalion.

It is very annoying that nearly every person who writes about the Rebellion says that Gen. Middleton was repulsed at Fish Creek by the rebels. Ask any veteran from the Great War if they considered they were repulsed when they took the objective allotted to them, drove out every one of the enemy and remained in possession of the piece of German trench and then paused for a more or less period while the wounded were evacuated, more ammunition brought up and vacancies caused by casualties filled. This on a smaller scale was what happened at Fish Creek. Not one of the rebels remained in their entrenchments; the wounded had to be sent back to Saskatoon without ambulances or trained personnel to handle them; every hardtack, can of bully beef or case of ammunition had to be brought from the railway by horse transport, it is not surprising that we did not

set out for Batoche the next day.

As soon as possible the wounded were sent to Saskatoon, a distance of forty miles, where an improvised hospital was set up, I think in the old school house, and the wounded cared by nurses recruited from among the local women of the town which was then two years old. Large stretchers were made of fence rails on which beef hides were fastened. These were laid on wagon boxes and one wounded man placed on each wagon.

As all supplies for the column were being freighted from Qu'Appelle a distance of over two hundred miles, Gen. Middleton decided to open a new route and ordered the steamer Northcote to be loaded with supplies at Swift Current Landing on the south Saskatchewan, twenty-six miles north of Swift Current, and to proceed down stream until it connected with his column near Clarke's Crossing, with an escort of two companies of the Midland Battalion. There was also a gatling gun on board. The steamer started with two scows loaded with oats and other supplies, lashed one on each side. The general, of course, had no personal knowledge of the river and had to rely on the advice of his

transport officers and others, who apparently had no more knowledge of the river than he had. When the Northcote started the river was so low that it was only a series of channels between the sand bars and as the boat descended one of these channels it would suddenly become too shallow to float the steamer. The procedure then was to work the two scows to the shore and unload them. The steamer was then unloaded into the scows and the empty vessel worked across the shallow water into another channel. The loading operation was the reverse of the unloading, the scows returned the vessel's cargo and then were reloaded from the shore and re-attached to the sides of the steamer. Also when suitable wood was found along the bank the soldiers had to cut enough to supply fuel for the boilers. With all the unexpected delay it was not surprising that the general was disappointed at not finding the Northcote at Clarke's Crossing. From Fish Creek a searching party was sent along the river to look for the boat which was found one hundred and twenty miles up stream.

On arrival the boat was barricaded with planks, sacks of oats

and bales of hay. The companies of the Midland Battalion joined Middleton's column and the half company of "C" School of Infantry went on board. The pilot was protected by baled hay and sections of boiler plate. One of the amusing, and at the same time serious incidents, was that that as there was no communication between the pilot house and the rest of the vessel except by crossing the deck to one of the stairs. When the Northcote was running the gauntlet at Batoche and was being fired on from both sides the two men in the pilot house had no means of escape except to lay flat on the floor of the pilot house and wait until a hole was cut through the the roof of the cabin by the ship's carpenter, assisted by a passenger who had come aboard at Medicine Hat, on his way to Prince Albert. This was D. Macdonald, afterwards a resident of Battleford after he became Rev D. Macdonald, now an Anglican missionary at Fort Hope, James Bay, Ont.

Humboldt was the hub of the system of trails through the northern part of Saskatchewan in the Rebellion days. The principal road was the one from Winnipeg to Edmonton, crossing the South

Saskatchewan at Clarke's Crossing, and passing through Battleford. Other trails led to each of the other ferries from Saskatoon to the road leading to Prince Albert. In the part of the country travelled by the soldiers crossings in order going downstream were Gabriel's Crossing, Batoche's ferry where travellers crossed to reach Duck Lake and Carlton and Lapine's Crossing were Middleton's column crossed the river on its way to Prince Albert. These different trails gave rise to an amusing incident on our second night at Fish Creek.

When Gen Middleton marched from Clarke's Crossing instructions were given for the transport teams to be switched on to the road to Batoche but when the check occurred at Fish Creek a messenger was sent across country to the Batoche trail to stop the transport going into Batoche. When he met the first string of teams the wagon boss corralled his outfit and started for Fish Creek with the messenger. When they reached the line of picquets they were challenged but for some reason did not answer. They were then fired on but disappeared. Hearing the shots, the bugler of the regimental guard sounded the alarm



and the whole camp was aroused and the different units fell in. After a long interval, during which the general had ridden out to investigate, he returned and told us that the sentries had thought that they had seen a couple of half breeds riding past but that they apparently had been mistaken. In the morning two men got up from the ground where they had thrown themselves when shot at. According to camp rumor, the reason they did not answer the sentry's challenge was that they did not know whether it was a rebel or a military outpost that they had ridden up to.

Near our camp at Fish Creek a road that had been cut through solid timber wound down the bank of the Saskatchewan from the prairie level to the river. It was just wide enough for a wagon to travel and was a most spooky place to be on guard at night. I was in charge of this post for three or four times and can recollect two incidents that happened. One when a messenger came up from the river to report that a number of ponies were at the river's edge on the opposite shore. I went down with him to investigate and found that the line of dark objects did have

the appearance of horses. There was nothing to do but watch to see if any men were with them. When daylight came the dark objects became the spaces between the blocks of ice with which the opposite shore was lined.

The other incident was when a detail of French's Scouts came down the road to ferry two despatch riders across the river and accompany them to the top of the bank. Shortly after the escort returned there was a burst of yelping like coyotes which extended right across our front facing the river, which died down as suddenly as it had started. In the morning I reported that I believed the scouts had been chased by the half-breeds. Of course, we had no way of knowing if it were correct or not but after my return to Battleford I found that a man was seen one morning where the Saskatoon trail comes down into the Battle River flat, now called the brickyard hill from the fact that in 1886 a brickyard was established there by Tom Dewan. Men were sent to learn who he was and bring him into the stockade. He proved to be Phillip Atkinson, a Battleford man, one of the despatch riders who had become separated when they were chased. Heading south-westerly

he struck for the Saskatoon trail and followed it towards Battleford. At Eagle Creek, with fifty miles yet to go, his horse fell dead, compelling him to travel on foot the rest of the way. He reported that they had been chased and that he believed his partner had been captured. On the other

hand, Wm. Diehl, the other despatch rider, had ridden northward and then circled to the east, swimming the South Saskatchewan. He re-crossed lower down and reached Prince Albert, giving the same report about being chased and believing his partner had been captured.



## BATOCHÉ

After camping at Fish Creek for twelve days awaiting the arrival of the steamer Northcote, on the morning of May 7th Gen Middleton's column again took the trail and marched out on the road to Batoché. By evening we reached Gabriel's Crossing where we camped for the night. In the morning the trail from Gabriel's Crossing to Humboldt was followed eastward through the bluffs of poplar and willow several miles deep that followed the river, until the open prairie was reached. Here we turned and marched across country with out a trail until the Humboldt-Batoché trail was intersected, when the column followed it to the edge of the belt of timber. Here we camped for the night, the outlying piquets being provided by the Midlanders who

had only been with the column since the arrival of the Northcote. On the morning of the 9th of May we were aroused early and followed the trail through a continuous strip of timber, tangled willow and sloughs, a splendid place for the half-breeds to have ambushed the troops. Just as we neared the river, where the ground was more open, we could hear continuous firing which showed that the Northcote had arrived and was being attacked. A gun from the Winnipeg Field Battery passed at a gallop and unlimbering on a small knoll fired a blank cartridge to let those on the boat know that help was near. This shot also gave the enemy the information that the troops were nearer than they were expected to be. The consequence was that the half-breeds

abandoned their attack on the boat and returned to their pits and the general was several days finding where they were.

At Batoche the South Saskatchewan made a very big bend to the west, coming back to the east side of the valley, a mile or so below Batoche. The edge of the prairie cut across the bend while a lower bench followed the river with the village of Batoche at the extreme point. Here a road wound down a ravine to the ferry which was a scow running on a wire cable. Batoche's house was on the south of the ravine and on the opposite side were two stores with large storehouses behind them. The Roman Catholic Church and convent were on the prairie level. The rifle pits were dug part of the way down the slope so that the skirmishers had to come over the crest of the slope and within range of the shotguns and rifles of the defenders. Where the pits were dug among the small trees, that in some places where on the sloping ground, lines of fire were cut so that any man crossing one of these cuttings was in plain view.

During the first day at Batoche I was on the right half of the line and had a very quiet day. The Royal Grenadiers were extended

as skirmishers on the right front and F Co. of the 90th was support on the extreme right extending backward at right angles to the front line to prevent any attack from the rear. As we were back from the top of the slope to the lower bench the only bullets that came our way were ricochet bullets from the front that enladed our company. We could hear them coming for quite an appreciable time, ending in a plunk as they struck the ground, sometimes between the men as they lay on the grass. Fortunately no one was hit. The only event was a man in civilian clothes who was seen walking around in front of the company but at quite a distance. As our Mounted men wore no uniform we were afraid to fire. He soon showed whether he was a friend or not by setting fire to the prairie. With a slight wind blowing directly in our faces, the fire and smoke approached us slowly. When it was quite close we retired before it for a short distance and stepped over the line of burning grass and resumed our original position.

At Batoche there was a cable ferry with the wire rope high above the river for protection from the high water of the spring

freshet. As the Northcote approached the ferry the windlass was released allowing the cable to fall with the intention of snaring the boat. The rope caught the smoke stacks which were carried away. Fortunately they fell so slowly that the resistance permitted the cable to slide up them sufficiently high to pass over the pilot house when the smokestacks fell. If the pilot house had been swept off the deck it would have put its occupants in a very serious position. Gradually the vessel turned around and drifted stern foremost down stream. Below Batoche the boat was anchored and temporary repairs made. The Northcote finally reached the Hudson Bay ferry twenty-two miles below Batoche.

From an account given by another member of the 90th, who was on the left of the line, that part had a more exciting time than our company had experienced.

He says that on the left of the line the enemy's fire was very hot as the soldiers approached the church and school. As they neared the church a white flag was displayed and General Middleton called in French for the inmates to come out which they did, comprising four priests, five

sisters of charity and a number of women and children. "A" Battery which had been firing at different objects including two houses and teepees, was under a very severe fire and was ordered to retire. Coming up the ravine one gun snagged on a tree stump. While the men were trying to release it some of the enemy, mostly Indians, made a charge to capture it but Capt. Howard with the Gatling directed so heavy a fire on them that they soon retreated.

In front of the church and on the open plain the main body of the 90th were deployed to protect the centre and left. Next were two companies of the Midland Batt., then the Grenadiers and men of the mounted units. "E" Co. of the 90th lay between the church and the cemetery where the firing was very heavy. About noon this company was moved to the extreme left of the line where they were on the river's bank and under a heavy fire from a ravine.

Just as the sun was setting in the west and was straight in the eyes of the volunteers they were ordered to retire to where the transport drivers had formed a zareba with their wagons. The enemy immediately left their pits

and followed up with whoops and yells, thinking the men were retreating but the volunteers retired in good order, firing continuous volleys as best they could with the sun in their eyes. The men formed a hollow square to the south of the transport and mounted men on bare prairie where they attempted some hasty entrenchments. I saw some digging with their sword bayonets and scooping up the loosed earth with their tin plates. The half-breeds crept up a ravine that headed near our position and, as darkness approached, poured a heavy fire into the zareba wounding a couple of the Surveyors Corps and a horse. Men were hurriedly rushed from the camp and drove the enemy back and the Midlanders were detailed to line the banks of the ravine as an outlying picquet. During the night single shots could be heard at intervals from the direction of this picquet. Finally I was instructed to go and tell them not to fire unless they saw some of the enemy. On reaching the head of the ravine I found only two men. I enquired for their officers and was told that they were asleep somewhere in the bush, with the rest of the men. The sentries told me that they had

seen active service before and knew the importance of a watch being kept and that they had fired occasionally to let the half-breeds know that there was a guard on the ravine in hopes of preventing them attempting to creep up it again. It was in reality the first experience of the Midlanders on active service duty as they had only arrived down the river on the Northcote a few days before while the 90th had been doing picquets and guards for over a month as well as the day of Fish Creek. There was no criticism of them in the firing line as they led the charge on the pits on the last day at Hatoche.

The next day the 90th held the advanced line which was within a short distance of the church and school where it turned a right angle, passing the buildings. "F" Co. was in this part of the line where there was not much firing going on. Suddenly two shots were fired by a couple of the men. On my enquiring what they had fired at they said that they saw someone signaling from the attic window of one of the buildings. Soon there was a white flag being waved from the window. Capt. Geo. Young, the Brigade Major, went to the building and talked to someone

through a window. He came back and returned again with two men and a stretcher, when a wounded priest was taken to our improvised hospital. He said that he was walking past the window in the attic when a bullet came through the window and hit him in the thigh. Which story is correct I have no way of knowing but the benefit of the doubt was given in favor of the priest.

This day and the next were similar to the first day. Skirmishing up to some part of the line of pits, trying to locate the enemy's exact position for Gen. Middleton desired to know just where they were and how strong before he made his final attack, and retiring each evening under a heavy fire from the half-breeds and Indians. It was said that more men were killed and wounded each evening than during the day.

On Monday, May 12, the position taken up was the two companies of the Midland Battalion were placed on the extreme left with their left flank on the river bank, then the Toronto Grenadiers with some of the 90th in support. Gen. Middleton took all the mounted men and one or more of the big guns to the right of the line of pits, leaving word

that he was going to make a feint attack to draw the enemy in that direction and that when the officer in command of the men on the left heard the sound of the engagement he was to order a charge.

Gen. Middleton fired one shot from the artillery to which the occupants of the pits replied by a volley, killing Lieut. Kippen, of the Surveyors Corps. He shortly afterwards returned to the zareba, as it was called, and criticized Col. Stranbenzie for not ordering an advance on the left. The latter replied that he had heard only one shot and waited for the sound of the engagement before charging the pits. While Gen. Middleton was eating his lunch Col. Stranbenzie went back to his men and ordered them to charge. With a loud cheer the Midlanders and Grenadiers went forward with a rush.

The pits were in a semi-circle quite a distance from the village with both ends on the river bank. The two companies of the Midland Batt. had the hardest nut to crack as they had to break through the line of pits nearest to the river bank. With some men down at the water's edge and others along the top of the bank this was soon done and as their

ise, extended by the Grenadiers, advanced they were in the rear of the next series of pits, necessitating their evacuation by their defenders.

"F" and "D" companies of the 90th were in our entrenchment when we heard the cheering and firing, with another company extended in front. As the charge advanced at right angles to the river the pits became further back and it was found necessary to prolong the line. A call was heard that a company of the 90th was wanted when the company extended in front of the camp moved off. Soon the call was repeated that another company of the 90th was wanted when "F" Co. went over the parapet and joined the right flank of the moving line, which was further prolonged by the men of the mounted units coming up on the run.

As the line came out into the open the village could be seen considerably to our left and our line divided about the centre, the left half swinging more to the left directly facing the houses from which a very hot fire was being kept up. While the others swung to the right and followed the direction of the river for a mile or more where they lay down until

evening, all opposition having ceased.

The village of Batoche, which the left wing of the line captured in the charge, was on the north of a ravine down which the trail to the ferry ran, and consisted of two stores facing the road and each had a large storehouse behind it, forming a square. By the time I came back from the right wing's position downstream from the village, the soldiers had loop-holed the buildings, dug trenches and thrown up parapets from building to building inside of which some of the troops slept that night. One of the buildings was made a guardroom, the cellar being used for a prison for the rebel prisoners as they were brought in.

By the time that the village was reached the Grenadiers and their supports from the 90th were completely intermingled so that the release of Rie's prisoners cannot be credited to any particular unit. The prisoners were found in the cellar of a store, with a box of stones on the trap door and also a two by four post wedged in from the floor to the ceiling. The soldiers soon removed the obstructions and had the prisoners out of the cellar. One of them that I was acquainted with said

that they could hear the firing and when they heard the rush of men coming into the building they thought that it was the half-breeds coming in to kill them before leaving as Riel had threatened to kill them if the soldiers did not stop firing. A prisoner named Asley had been sent with a message to Gen. Middleton, threatening to kill the prisoners if the soldiers did not stop firing where the women and children were. Gen. Middleton replied for Riel to move the women and children to some other place and let him know when he would undertake that no shots would be fired in their direction. As the men were at that time sweeping across the prairie the fight was over and Riel on the run before anything could be done. Fortunately the women and children were in camp on the slope to the river and were in no danger while the village was being attacked.

Batoche's residence was a good sized two story house opposite the store but on the prairie on the other side of the ravine. Capt. French, of French's Scouts, rushed into the house and began firing from an upper window. A shot from the ravine killed French and a soldier at the head of the

ravine, hearing the shot fired down the trail and killed the half-breed.

It was May 12th that the village of Batoche was taken and half-breeds dispersed ending their participation in the Rebellion, the rest of the time until near the end of June being devoted to the Indian part of the rebel forces, which were the only ones to commit murder and burn and loot houses.

On the 13th just as I arrived back from the right wing with a message from the officer in command, a steamboat arrived up stream from Port Fraser, as the mounted police post at the Hudson's Bay Crossing of the South Saskatchewan, was named. It had as a guard twenty-four police under command of Insp. White-Fraser. My brother William, who had joined the Mounted Police as a special constable at Carlton, was one of the guard. They had orders not to do anything to cause an attack on the boat and consequently took no part in the engagement, although they saw, as they approached Batoche, men running away.

Many men carrying white flags came in to surrender and were permitted to return to their homes, only those whose names



were found on the list of Riel's Council being detained. Those arrested were put on the steamboat in charge of the police. When I went on the boat the prisoners were sitting in a circle on the lower deck, with big ship lanterns turned on them. The guard at first was twelve men but Gen. Middleton ordered the guard to be doubled. As there were only twenty-four police on

board, the previous night's guard was aroused and summoned back for another night's duty. As we marched away the next morning I do not know what arrangements were made for guarding the prisoners.

May 13th was devoted to a diligent search by the mounted units for the members of Riel's Council who had not surrendered.



## OFF FOR PRINCE ALBERT

On the 14th the column set out for Prince Albert following the south side of the river to Lepine's crossing. Here a day was lost in crossing the South Saskatchewan, using a steamboat for a ferry.

While in camp on the South side of the river a scout arrived with word that Riel had been taken prisoner and was being brought in. Instructions were sent back to remain outside the camp until arrangements were made for his reception. A small "A" tent was pitched not far from the tents of the 90th and a guard mounted with a sentry at each end. Orders were given that all men were to be confined to their tents and no demonstra-

tion was to be made on Riel's arrival. In a short time a democrat wagon drew up at the entrance to the tent and I saw a man get down and walk into the tent. This was the only glimpse that I had of Riel. An escort of men from the 90th, under command of Capt. G. H. Young, acting Brigade Major, who had been one of Riel's prisoners during the previous Rebellion in the Red River Settlement in 1869.

They proceeded by the steamboat to Saskatoon where road transportation was secured for the overland trip to Moose Jaw and Regina.

Col. Boulton, of Boulton's Scouts, was another previous prisoner when he had been sen-

tenced to death by Riel and whose sentence was commuted at the earnest solicitation of the Anglican bishop and other Winnipeg friends. He was very anxious to be the one to capture Riel and was out with his troop in extended order sweeping up the country in the search for the leader of the Rebellion. Three scouts, Wm Diehl, Wm Anderson and Tom Hourie, with a fourth man behind one of them on his horse came riding through their ranks. To an enquiry, 'who have you there' the reply was "some old man, probably Riel's cook". In consequence Col Boulton did not know that Riel was a prisoner until the troop arrived back in camp.

When the various units of Gen. Middleton's column had been ferried across the river, together with the innumerable string of transport teams, we set out again for Prince Albert. Each day a different infantry unit took the lead, a position that was free of dust than further back. The day before we arrived at Prince Albert the Midlanders thought that the step was too slow and boasted that it was their turn to lead when they would set a quicker pace. Accordingly the next morning they started

at a much livelier rate but the 90th, the next in column of route kept right up to them, suggesting that they get out of the road and let us pass. After what was reported to be seventeen miles marched at a rate of about four miles to the hour without a pause we came to the bank of the North Saskatchewan at the west end of the flat on which Prince Albert straggled along for several miles. Here we halted for quite a while, possibly to give the police and citizens an opportunity to arrange a reception. The rest was very acceptable as the men had faced a very strong wind and a liberal amount of dust. There being a house near where our company of the 90th were resting a number of us went to the house and found a woman churning. Upon her enquiring as to where we were from, she was informed that we were the Scotch company of the Winnipeg Rifles. She was probably Scotch herself as she gave us the whole of the butter milk, a very acceptable change to our course of slough water and black tea.

When we reached the town the Mounted Police and volunteers were on parade and apparently all the population was assembled near by. Gen. Middleton was

presented with an address of welcome, afterwards the various corps pitched their tents for a few days rest.

The Mounted Police, under Col. Irvine, numbered about two hundred, who had been detailed for the defence of the settlement which was several miles long and was isolated from the rest of the province, all the main roads and the telegraph line passing through the part of the country occupied by those in rebellion. The means of communication were couriers to Battleford and other riders from Battleford to Swift Current, the latter being a two hundred mile stretch, totally uninhabited.

May 23rd. Gen. Middleton set out for Battleford on a steamer with an escort of soldiers from one of the units while the re-

mainder of the troops held a Sports Day. I saw a buckboard arriving in camp and going to meet it I found that it was Robt. Jefferson, from Poundmaker's camp with a letter from Poundmaker to Gen. Middleton. As the general was already away, Jefferson returned to Carlton and was able to catch the boat, delivering his letter and obtaining a reply, which stated that the only terms of surrender were unconditional surrender at Battleford Sunday, May 24th, the remainder of the foot soldiers embarked on three or four steamboats, the mounted men going by road. We arrived at Battleford on the afternoon of May 26th, and found that Poundmaker had surrendered during the morning. Middleton's column then pitched camp west of the stockade near the tents of Col. Otter's column.



## SURRENDER OF POUNDMAKER

When Robt. Jefferson delivered Poundmaker's letter to Gen. Middleton on the steamer Northwest on May 23rd, the latter sent the following reply,

POUNDMAKER, I have utterly defeated the half breeds and Indians at Batoche and have made prisoners of Riel and most of his Council.

I have made no terms with them, neither will I make terms with you. I have men enough to destroy you and your people, or at least to drive you away to starve, and I will do so unless you bring in the teams you took and yourself and Councillors to meet me, with your arms, at Battleford, on Tuesday, 26th. I am glad to hear that you treated the

prisoners well and have released them.

Fred Middleton.

Father Cochon came in from Poundmaker's camp with a letter to Col Otter in which he promised to lay down his arms and yield unconditionally and stated that he would gradually move his camp nearer town so that Gen. Middleton would not have so far to go to see him.

Gen. Middleton would not consider going to Poundmaker's camp but ordered him to come to Battleford. He met them on the north bank of the Battle River, about 300 yards west of the road to the bridge. He was sitting on a chair and the Indians were sitting or standing facing him. After a pow-wow lasting several hours during which the Indians

told long stories which were chiefly denial of wrong doing on their part or knowledge of it in others and anxiety as to how they were to be fed. At the end of the long talk, Gen. Middleton gave them some very plain talk and said that now Riel had been beaten they had come here and told all sort of lies.

By order of the government Poundmaker's, Lean Man, Yellow Blanket and Breaking through the Ice were detained till it was decided what was to be done with them. The murderers of Jas. Payne, a farming instructor, and Bernard Tremond, a rancher, were also arrested.

I arrived in Battleford a few hours too late to see the surrender and have taken these notes from the HERALD of June 1st, 1885



## BATTLEFORD TO FORT PITT

The last of Middleton's column left Prince Albert on Sunday, May 25th, for Battleford. The foot soldiers embarked on the steamers and the mounted men by the trail. We arrived at Battleford on Monday afternoon too late to see the end of Poundmaker as a chief for he had been forced to surrender to Gen. Middleton in the morning. The General

had left for Battleford on the Friday before we did and consequently was in Battleford a day ahead of us. There being nothing for us to do we pitched camp near the stockade.

It being known that General Strange had located Big Bear entrenched on Frenchman's Butte and that he was probably strong enough to defeat him a party of

Col. Otter's column was sent across the river to form a line covering the country as far north as the north end of Turtle Lake and a party of police from Prince Albert was sent across the river at Carlton to cover the line from Green Lake to head off any Indians going eastward. Unfortunately the two parties did not connect and Big Bear went north of Col. Otter's men and then turned south before going as far as the police who were around Pelican Lake to Green Lake.

When the Indians were retreating from Frenchman's Butte they came to the old trail running eastward north of Turtle Lake and advised Big Bear to take it as they were not going to fight the soldiers any more.

Middleton's column had a quiet time in Battleford for the remainder of the week until a boat loaded with supplies for General Strange's men which had been sent up the river to get in touch with the Alberta column turned back with Scout Borradaile, who was coming down the river with despatches for Gen. Middleton in which Gen. Strange said that he had been stood off by Big Bear at Frenchman's Butte and asked Gen. Middleton to send him additional men. General Middle-

ton immediately ordered his column to embark on Sunday morning and we set off up-stream to join Gen. Strange's men.

The steamer was protected by heavy planks nailed to the posts supporting the upper deck. When we tied up at night the guard on the lower deck sat behind the barricade and watched the river for any canoes that might be on the water. Malcolm Young, a sergeant in the Battleford Rifles, had been relieved from duty when Gen. Middleton had disbanded the Rifles and Home Guards on his arrival at Battleford. He at once joined the 90th and was on guard the same night I was Officer of the night and whenever I had an opportunity I put it in with him at his post on the lower deck. We were the nearest to the cookhouse in which the general's food was cooked. Early in the morning we saw men going in and out the cookhouse and thought it was the cooks making an early breakfast. Soon after the guard was relieved Young found himself in prison on a charge of stealing Gen. Middleton's pies. Fortunately I was able to appear as a witness for him and stated that while we were together, we saw men whom we thought were

cooks going in and out of the cookhouses. This cleared Malcolm Young and he told me afterwards that it was the only thing that cleared him as he was unknown to the majority of the men.

We had left Battleford on June 1st and reached south of Frenchman's Butte on the 2nd. At this point we landed and went into camp. After meeting Gen. Strange Gen. Middleton sent him to go around by Frog Lake to Beaver River and camp where the Hudson's Bay Co. had freighted the flour that was sent up by sleigh and then to be forwarded into the north in the spring by flatboats down past Green Lake to Isle la Crosse. Gen. Middleton decided that he would take the mounted men and 150 of the infantry—50 out of each battalion—and follow up Steele who was following Big Bear's trail. I was detailed to accompany Lieut. Bolster and fifty men of the 90th as part of this force.

The infantry were moved up to Fort Pitt except the one hundred and fifty men detailed to go with the mounted men who moved up to the valley at Frenchman's Butte. About half-past one in the morning a scout brought word from Col. Steele that he had an

engagement with the Indians at the ford on Loon Lake and had three men wounded. In consequence reveille blew at three o'clock and the fall in at five o'clock.

A short distance on our road there was a slough of water across the trail. One of the mounted men, who had made up his mind to turn in his horse and join the footsoldiers, saw the water and watched the infantry go through it. He then changed his mind and kept his horse. We marched until evening when we camped for the night. Sometime later Gen. Middleton caught up to us. I first saw him at breakfast next morning when he had breakfast with us which consisted of a chunk of bacon that one of artillery officers found in a Indian dug-out at Frenchman's Butte. By cutting the six sides off the piece it was made suitable for us to eat and the general enjoyed fried bacon served up on spilt hardtack, which was quite a change after subsisting on hardtack and corned beef since April. I imagine that orders were sent back during the night for proper campaign rations for the general because he did not have to join our men for dinner. We only went with the mounted men for a

day and a half for we began making travois in the afternoon which were loaded in wagons and carried as far as the column went and then taken out of the wagons and burnt.

We received orders for the footsoldiers to return to Fort Pitt the next day. Consequently next morning we took the trail backwards, going by Onion Lake agency buildings, to Fort Pitt.



## THE TRIP TO WINNIPEG

The foot soldiers of Middleton's column were now concentrated at Fort Pitt with nothing to do until they should embark for home. I took advantage of this to obtain leave to go to Frog Lake to look over our firm's property at the millsite. I took with me Malcolm Young, miller for Prince Bros., Battleford, who had joined the 90th at Battleford and went over every piece of mill machinery.

As the erection of the machinery had not begun up to the time the mill was burnt none of the machinery was injured in anyway and was afterwards erected at Onion Lake by the Indian Department where it was used until a couple of years ago when it was moved to some other reserve in the west.

While at Frog Lake I was the guest of the Midland Battalion which had been brought together again after having been separated when two companies had left

Swift Current on the Northcote when it made the trip to Fish Creek with supplies and ammunition for Gen. Middleton in the previous April. Col. Williams while forming the battalion in Ontario had attached a graduate of the Royal Military College to each company so that I met about eight of my old college chums. In consequence I had a pleasant visit while waiting for the boat that I had come up from Fort Pitt on to be ready for the return trip. This steamer landed at the nearest point to Frog Lake, about 6 miles from the mill site.

While I was away a party of Big Bear's prisoners had come in which included the two ladies, Mrs. Gowanlock and Mrs. Delaney. I went to the boat that they were quartered on to see Mrs. Gowanlock who had heard that I had been killed.

Steamers began to be gathered at Fort Pitt to take the infantry home and I got leave to run

down to Battleford to see how the rebellion had affected my folks and then went on board the steamer that was carrying the 90th. The steamboats were also carrying four or five other battalions belonging to Ontario and Quebec. The boats only made short stops at Battleford and Prince Albert and were met at the junction of the North and South Saskatchewan by some flatboats from Saskatoon with the wounded men, nurses and doctors from the hospital at that point. These kept aboard the flatboats, which had tent covers until Cedar Lake was reached when the wind was so strong that the wounded and their attendants were moved to our boat.

Arriving at Grand Rapids the men marched across to Lake Winnipeg while their kits, etc., were brought past the rapids on the Hudson's Bay Co's. tram line, a structure of wooden rails on which the flat cars were hauled by horses.

On the lake emptied freight scows were provided for our occupation, then to be towed behind two steamers. These boats had laid at Grand Rapids for two weeks waiting for us and as there was no connection with the outer world by telegraph and as the

radio was unheard of in those days they had a tiresome wait.

The barges without ballast were towed two behind one boat and one behind the other. There was one tier of men on the upper deck without any railing and other men in the hold and as the wind raised white caps on the lake the empty barges danced like cockie shells and caused a great deal of seasickness among the men. At last the Red River was reached when we had a quiet time going up the river to Selkirk. Here we landed to take a train to Winnipeg but found tables set for a dinner provided by the ladies of Selkirk and Winnipeg.

Col. Williams, of the Midland Batt., having died on the boat before we reached Battleford, his body was sent overland to Swift Current to be taken by rail to his home in Ontario, the Midlanders went direct to Ontario to be in time for the funeral. I think a Quebec Battalion also went home at once. The remainder entrained for Winnipeg which we reached during the afternoon. After the battalion had formed up at the station we moved off again for the last time and found Main Street crowded as it never had been before with several arches across it. When we arrived in



front of the City Hall the battalion was formed into column and halted. An address of welcome was given us, after which we proceeded to the drill shed. Here the regiment turned in their arms, blankets, etc., and were dismissed to their homes, but were not finally discharged for several

days later after the pay lists were written up when the men received the first pay of the campaign. Having reached Winnipeg again where I joined the battalion I now conclude my Reminiscences, which unfortunately are sketchy as fifty years is a long time to trying to remember everything.



# The Duck Lake Fight

(The following account of the Duck Lake Fight was written by Wm. Laurie for the Saskatchewan Herald. He was one of the participants in the fight).

Carlton, March 26th.

It is with a heavy heart that I take up my pen this evening to record the doings of this most eventful day of the year, at least to us who reside in the North-West. Eleven men who were this morning in the full enjoyment of health and vigor have to-night crossed that bourne whence no traveller returneth, yielding up their lives in defence of their homes and constitutional government, while several more are languishing on beds of pain. Little did any of us think as we drove out of Fort Carlton this morning amidst the hearty cheers of our comrades who were not permitted to accompany us, that the cold hand of death would be laid upon any of us ere the sun had set. Prince Albert suffered the most severely, ten men being reported dead and missing at roll-call—most of them of the cream of the town, and men who could ill be spared either in peace or war, while the police only had

one man killed in the field although a number of them were hard hit. But I must be chronological to be intelligible.

As I wrote yesterday the police went over last night to Kelly's at Duck Lake for some oats and returned unmolested, but from information collected by scouts it was considered advisable to exercise a little more caution in the event of a future trip. As it was necessary to get some more oats, eight teams were sent out this morning with eight police in addition to the teamsters, and four mounted men in advance as scouts. When within about two miles of Mitchell's store Consts. Waite and Jamieson (late of the Black Watch, Ashantee war), were surrounded by a number of Beardy's Indians, who were armed and talked in a threatening manner, and also made several attempts to seize their bridles. No attempt was made to fire upon the police as they fell back upon the sleighs, but the same tactics were resorted to as were noticed at Poundmaker's last summer, that is, attempting to provoke the red-coats to fire the first shot.

When the party had retraced

their steps to Carlton, Major Crozier immediately set out with about one hundred men, including the 7-pounder gun, with a gun detachment under Inspector Howe, with Sergt. Smart (an old "A" battery man) as number one.

The drive out was uneventful until the same point had been reached where the morning's encounter had taken place, when the alarm was given by the advance guard that the rebels were in front in considerable numbers. As the police came over the crest of a hill the rebels were seen on the next to the number of nearly four hundred. Their horsemen immediately divided, galloping off to right and left, taking cover in the dense brush to the right and behind a sharp hill to the left, the men on foot acting in a similar manner only keeping nearer to the trail. Two men came down the trail waving a white handkerchief and Major Crozier and Joseph McKay, interpreter and guide for the force, went forward to parley with them. "Who are you?" the Major demanded through the interpreter. "Crees and Half-breeds", the spokesmen replied; adding "what do you want?" "Nothing", the Major answered; "we only came to see what was wrong. You had

better go back", he added; whereupon the Indian snatched for McKay's revolver, which appeared to be the signal agreed upon, as at the same instant several shots were fired by the rebels from behind the hill. Major Crozier at once gave the command to fire and the battle commenced, the police covering themselves behind the sleighs which had been drawn up in line across the road. Without moving from the spot where the parley had taken place Jos. McKay emptied the six barrels of his revolver, dropping two fellows who were endeavoring to draw a bead on him at short range. The civilians deployed to the right and took shelter behind a fence and in a bluff which at this point ran close to the former, but unfortunately they ran into an ambush, for in an angle of the fence, out of the line of fire from our forces, stood a couple of buildings which were garrisoned by the enemy, who deliberately picked off the men in the edge of the bluff one after another. The attack was so unexpected on the part of the police that they had no choice of position, and in fact it is now evident that the morning's affray was a cleverly arranged decoy, for they had already selected the scene of

battle and had everything arranged down to the minutest detail, even the flag of truce being a part of the programme, as while the parley was going on the Half-breeds were enabled to place themselves under cover and to cross the opening between the bluffs. The big gun was brought into action and a shrapnel shell discharged at the point where the firing was the fiercest. The fuse was admirably timed and the shell burst a little above and in front of the rebel forces, scattering death and destruction all around. In the meantime a continuous fusillade had been kept up from the Winchesters and Sniders and the Half-breed rifles were silenced for some minutes, a fact which elicited hearty cheers from our men. Round after round was fired from the big gun, while volleys pealed forth from the little ones, but the Half-breeds and Indians who were ambushed in the buildings in the right and in the bluffs on the left poured in such a deadly flank fire that it was realized that in order to dislodge them from the position they held would cost too many valuable lives, and it was decided to retire. A number of civilians had already been brought down, while Const. Gibson had dropped dead

with a bullet through his breast while passing ammunition to the big gun, and several police had already been wounded. The horses were brought up and hooked in, several horses and men going under during the operation. I was talking to Capt. Moore as we were about climbing into one of the sleighs, when he exclaimed, "I am hit in the leg", and fell with the bone shattered.

The wounded were gathered up and put in sleighs, as was also poor Gibson's body, but the bodies of the civilians were so close to the house garrisoned by the rebels that it were foolhardiness to attempt to bring them in.

The special police from Prince Albert suffered terribly, as out of the detachment that went into the bluff ten were killed and three wounded.

Too much praise cannot be accorded the police, both regulars and specials, for the pluck and nerve exhibited by them under the galling fire of the rebels, not a solitary man flinching from duty, and when it is considered that perhaps not more than ten men in the hundred had ever been under fire before it is worthy of more than passing notice. The utmost coolness was displayed by officers and men and com-

paratively little ammunition was wasted. When it is considered that the percentage of killed and wounded was so great - greater even than the loss of the British in any of the recent engagements in the Soudan - it is marvellous that the men, or boys as indeed many of them were, succeeded in keeping their heads so well. And this affords still another proof of the indomitable pluck of the Britisher.

Two of the police horses were killed, Prince and Diogenes, both belonging to Battleford post; and J B., an old horse that had been at nearly every post, had to be abandoned with a broken leg. Several other were wounded but were brought home, among them Brian and Brag, of the Battleford detachment. Const Ford's horse had five bullets in him, notwithstanding which he succeeded in bringing his rider home.

Shortly after we got home Commissioner Irving arrived with ninety-five police, including Inspectors White-Fraser, Saunders and Drayner and twenty-eight additional specials from Prince Albert, bringing our force up to three hundred men. It is rumored that nothing further will be done until the arrival of the reinforcements from Win-

nipeg, which is indeed the wisest course, as the rebels have possession of part of the country surrounding Duck Lake, which is admirably adapted to guerilla warfare such as comes natural to the natives.

We have repeatedly been told that they were poorly armed mostly with muzzle loading guns - but the rapidity of the firing and the sharp cracking of the reports gave indisputable proof that there were numerous Winchesters and Sharps at work and plenty of ammunition to back them up.

March 27--9 a.m.

Poor Arnold died at 1.30 this morning, brave to the last. The others are doing well under the care of Dr. Miller, assisted by Hospital Sergeant Branthwaite, who came in with the re-inforcements, and Hospital Orderly Roberts.

The following is the list of the killed and wounded.

#### POLICE KILLED

William Gibson, Inspector Howe's servant, shot through the heart and killed instantly.

#### WOUNDED

Insp. Howe, flesh wound in calf of leg.

Corp. Gilchrist, leg broken.

Const. Manners-Smith, shot through the lungs.

Const Arnold, shot in lungs, neck and head. He had already received four wounds in Texas.

Const A. Miller, slight flesh wound.

Const J. J. Wood, flesh wound in arm

Const Miller,

Const Sydney Gordon, Royal Military College Graduate, was shot through both legs, flesh wound.

#### PRINCE ALBERT VOLUNTEERS KILLED

S. C. Elliott, lawyer, son of Judge Elliott, London

William Napier, cousin of Capt MacDowall

R. Middleton, of Middlesex.

J. Anderson, native.

Daniel McKenzie, of Prince Edward Island.

-- Bakie, Orkney, an old H. B. Company man.

Alex Fisher.

Daniel McPhail, of McPhail Brothers.

Capt. Morton, of Ireland.

#### WOUNDED

Capt. Moore, leg broken (since amputated).

A. W. R. Markley, shot in stomach.

A. McNab, C.E., flesh wound in arm.

Alex Stewart (son of J. Stewart, druggist) slight graze.

Charles Newitt, of England.

Prince Albert, March 30.

My last letter left Carlton on the morning of Friday, 27th, the day after the engagement of Duck Lake. After supper orders were given to the men to hold themselves in readiness to move at a moment's notice, an order which had been momentarily expected all afternoon, it being an open secret that Carlton was to be evacuated. The sleighs were loaded with flour and oats as heavily as they could carry, and the balance of the flour which could not be taken away, about five hundred sacks, were ripped open and scattered on the ground and mixed with manure, or sprinkled with coal oil. The teams were hitched up about midnight and stood ready to start at a moment's notice, while the work of destruction went on. Shortly after two o'clock a bright light was seen in the Sergeant-Major's quarters, which were in the building over the gate, which proved to be on fire. Some hay thrown out of a mattress which was being prepared for the transport of one of the wounded men having ignited from the stove-pipe. The alarm was at once given and vigorous attempts made to extinguish the flames, Const.

Baugh being severely burned about the face. The out building being old and built of spruce logs the flames spread rapidly. The wounded men were in the next room to that in which the fire originated, and attention had been turned to rescuing them. When the first man mounted the stair he met Manners Smith, who was shot through the breast, coming down the stairs without assistance. When he offered to help Smith, the latter replied, "Oh, I'm all right, go and save Gilchrist." The wounded men were saved and a large number of the teams were driven through the gate while a squad tore a passage through the cordwood barricade, by which the other teams escaped. In the excitement nearly one half of the blankets and kit bags was left lying on the square, not having been loaded up when the fire broke out.

The road was taken about 4 a.m. on Saturday, and Prince Albert was reached about 4 p.m. without any mishap, where the party was received with loud cheers from the people. The citizens had built a cordwood barricade about the Presbyterian church and manse—two brick buildings—and all the spare pro-

visions were gathered in and a temporary barracks built for the women and children.

Thos. Sanderson, Wm. Miller, T. E. Jackson, and Wm. Drain went up to Duck Lake yesterday for the dead bodies, and returned to-day, with nine dead bodies, and the wounded man, Newitt, who was given up. Newitt had his knee-cap shattered by a bullet and had his hands bruised in protecting his head from the butt of an Indian's rifle. D. McPhail had been shot again, the gun being held so close to his face as to burn his whiskers off.

The following is a list of the police in the action:

Supt. L. N. F. Crozier, check out.

Dr. Miller.

Sergt-Major F. G. Dann.

Sergts. Wm. O. Brooks, A. Stewart, J. Pringle.

Corps Gilchrist (leg broken), F. Fowler, J. Collins, H. J. A. Davison.

Consts Arnold (died of wounds), T. H. Hoyland, A. Murray, Perkins, David Scott, T. H. Cochrane, A. E. Dunn, H. DesBarres, W. Nunn, R. Dousley, I. C. Fleming, A. Macdonald, A. E. G. Montgomery, A. Miller (wounded), J. Rum-

merfield, A McMillan, A. Cole,  
E. Littlefield, J. J. Wood (wounded),  
Sidney Gordon (wounded),  
A. E. Manners-Smith (wounded),  
T. Redmond, G. K. Garrett  
(wounded), O. Worthington, W.  
D. Macpherson, John Street,  
Wm. Smith, H. Hammond, T.  
C. Craigie, R. F. Jamieson, W.  
W. Lunnin Mountain, W. Jackson.

Trumpeter—W. T. Halbhass.

Interpreter—Joseph McKay

Gun Detachment—Insp. Howe  
(wounded), Sergt. W. C. Smart,  
Corp. C. Chasie, Coasts F. J.  
Gribble, J. Edwards, E. W.  
Tedd, L. Fontaine, E. Morow,  
F. Gartone, A. H. Woodman,  
T. Gibson (killed).

#### PRINCE ALBERT VOLUNTEERS

Capt. Moore, Prince Albert

Lieut. Morton, formerly Capt.  
Irish Volunteers

Sgt-Maj. Powers, ex-police

Sgts A. McNabb, C. E. Justus  
Wilson, T. N. Campbell

W. Napier, W. C. Ramsey, W.  
Bakie, Orkney; Jas. Brown, pris-  
oner first Riel Rebellion; C.  
Byrnes, R. Burns, W. Drain and  
H. Nelson, Peterborough; Wm.  
Dixon, S. C. Elliott, C. Gaveen,  
C. Hamilton, W. T. Haslam, D.  
Linklater, A. W. R. Mackley, R.  
Middleton, R. McGinn, Thomas  
McKay, J. P.; Daniel McKenzie,  
D. McPhail, C. Newitt, John Wey-  
meskirch, ex-policeman, R. W.  
Tompkins, Duck Lake, J. Ander-  
son, W. Laurie, Battleford; Hen-  
ry Kelly, Duck Lake; J. Mack,  
Alex. S. Stewart, Alex. Fisher, H.  
Mitchell, Duck Lake; W. J. Barker,  
John Paul, Duck Lake





# The Frog Lake Massacre

In 1884 the village of Frog Lake began to grow. Tom Quinn, the Indian Agent, came to Battleford to hire a carpenter to build the agency buildings and took back Charles Gowan, a Californian half breed. The Indian Department advertised a bonus for somebody to put in a grist mill. It happened that Mr McCuaig of Medicine Hat, had opened a branch store in Battleford the previous year with J. A. Gowanlock, a practical millwright, in charge. After a year's operations he decided to close the store. This happened just when the Government's advertisement about the mill appeared. Mr. Gowanlock then suggested to R. C. Laurie to form a partnership and take up the offer. Mr. Gowanlock went up to Frog Lake and selected a site where Frog Lake creek left the reserve on its way to join the North Saskatchewan.

The mill was to be run by water and was just outside the reserve. Shortly after returning to Battleford the Government accepted the offer which substituted a sawmill for one set of stones.

Mr. Gowanlock then went to Ontario to buy the machinery

and also get married and I went to Frog Lake with some men to get out timber for the dam and buildings. On returning from Ontario, Gowanlock left his wife in Battleford for a few weeks and came on to Frog Lake, with Willscraft, a carpenter, and Gilchrist.

Geo. Dill had come up from Battleford and opened a small store this same fall.

There was a Hudson's Bay store conducted by J. K. Simpson, with W. B. Cameron as clerk. Tom Quinn's nephew, Henry Quinn, had a blacksmith shop. There was also a detachment of six members of the N. W. M. P., in charge of Corp. Sleight.

J. A. Delaney was the farming instructor and John Pritchard was interpreter.

Things went quietly all winter but towards April Big Bear Indians, who had been gathered up along the American boundary and brought north to be put on a reserve, became very obnoxious and dictatorial. Big Bear was not bad himself but his second son, Imasees, was the real leader in the Frog Lake massacre, backed by Wandering Spirit, Miserable Man, and others of his party.

On the night of March 30th, by the advice of the Indian Agent, the six police went back to Fort Pitt. They were quartered in an empty storehouse, without water and no means of escape if attacked, and outnumbered by the Indians over fifty to one. Quinn thought that the presence of the police was a matter of incitement to the Indians and that without their presence he could keep control of the Indians.

The police also warned all the whites of the settlement that they had better come down to Pitt. They gathered at the instructor's home and were going to start down the trail to the Fort about ten at night, the two white women to be given nearly an hour's start and the rest to follow. If the Indians attacked them they would put up as much of a fight as possible and let the women escape. Before starting they asked the interpreter's advice who said that there would be no trouble. Some more flour and bacon was all the Indians wanted. The whites there upon decided to put off their trip to daylight and went to bed. Tom Quinn, his nephew, Henry Quinn, and Charlie Gowin in the Agent's house, Cameron in his

quarters at the H B C. store, the priests at their rectory and the remainder at the Instructor's house.

Very early in the morning of April 2nd some Indians took the horses out of Delaney's stable and made prisoners of those in his house. They were afterwards taken over to the Catholic Church where mass was being said, it being Holy Thursday, the day before Good Friday.

While the service in the church was going on some painted and armed Indians entered and created a disturbance. Prayers ended all came out of the church and shortly afterwards the whites were rounded up and taken back to Delaney's house. Quinn was outside between Delaney's and Pritchard's houses and with him was Charlie Gowin. Cameron was at the Hudson's Bay store giving out things to some Indians when word was sent to the store to join the other white men but on the way back to Delaney's he was again taken back to the store to give out some more things that friendly Indians wanted in their endeavors to keep him separated from the other white prisoners. Harry Quinn, while still at the Agency building in the morning was warned

by an Indian to leave at once and started on foot for Pitt, making his way through the bluffs until he was well away from the settlement of Frog Lake. Father Marchand was the priest at Onion Lake and had only arrived at Frog Lake the preceding evening.

Eventually the whites were taken out of the house and told to go to the Indian camp near the lake. When Quinn was told to join the others and go with them he refused and Wandering Spirit shot him. Goun was also shot. As soon as the Indians accompanying the prisoners heard the sound of shots behind them they began shooting the men in their charge. Gowanlock and Delaney were walking with their wives when they felt and when the priests went to them they were also shot. Gilchrist, Dill and Williscraft separated and tried to reach the shelter of the trees but were killed before they could do so. Gilchrist fell in the brush that surrounds bluffs of poplar and when I visited his grave some years afterwards with his father the poplar had spread so as to surround the grave.

The bodies of Quinn and Goun were put in Pritchard's house

and burned with the house. No trace of bodies were ever found although after the troops arrived all the debris of the house was moved by the soldiers.

Louis Goulet started to gather the bodies together and had those of Fathers Marchand and Faford, Delaney and Gowanlock placed in the cellar of the church. Goulet told me that he had to stop because the Indians threatened to kill him if he did not cease. The church was afterwards burned when all the clothes of the dead men were burned except a small part of the coats under their backs. By this means the bodies of Delaney and Gowanlock were known but the priests were never known apart as the pieces of black cloth were of identical material.

Gilchrist, Dill and Williscraft lay where they fell until the arrival of Strange's Column, about four weeks afterwards, when the three graves were dug and the bodies were placed in them. The graves were not filled in at the time but covered with doors as the dead men were unknown to the soldiers. Later on the graves were finished, and marked until some years later, and the bodies, together with Const. Cowan from Fort Pitt,

were interred in a small plot near the former Village which had been burned by the Indians. The bodies of the two priests were later on buried under the Catholic Church at Onion Lake.

A couple of days after the massacre Cowan, Loasby and Henry Quinn were sent from Pitt to see if any others might have escaped into the woods that surrounded the village. They went by the direct trail along the river road. On coming in sight of Frog Lake they could not see any Indians and only the smouldering remains of the houses that formed the Village. The patrol returned to Pitt by the trail they had gone up on until near the fort when they crossed over to the Onion Lake road which they found marked by many hoof prints. Quinn said the Indians were ahead of them but one of the policeman said the men from the fort had been rounding up the police horses.

They soon saw the Indians in camp to the left of the trail and decided to ride past them. But Quinn knew more about Indian fighting in the United States than most of those living in Canada knew and guarded his horse more to the right until he got into the timber. He then headed for the

river and descended the bank to the water's edge, made his way down stream until he had the fort between him and the Indians. Here, taking shelter in a small excavation in the bank, he lay until next morning when he climbed the hill and entered the fort.

But it did not fare so well with his comrades. Cowan was killed and Loasby was thought to be dead when Lone Man chased him down the slope towards the fort. A second shot wound seemed to be fatal. As he lay on the ground Lone Man crept up to him and turning him over took his revolver and ammunition. After Lone Man had left him he revived and staggered about five hundred feet to the fort where his companions were removing the flour from a bastion to allow him to enter.

#### THE FALL OF FORT PITT

From the dates of documents it seems the police must have remained in the fort for almost two weeks after they had learned of the massacre at Frog Lake. On April 15th Mr W. J. McLean, who was the Hudson's Bay Co.'s Factor in charge of their store in the fort, was in the Indian camp to have a talk with the chiefs when suddenly the three scouts

who had been to Frog Lake returned and was attacked by the Indians. After this Mr McLean was made a prisoner and was told to get the refugees in the Fort to come into the Indian camp and for the police to go away at once. The ice in the river was breaking up but not yet run clear but the police had built a scow to be prepared for emergencies. The police put some ammunition and provisions in the scow and then marched down to it with their wounded comrade Leasby in their midst. The scow was launched but nearly filled with water and at one time their escape seemed hopeless. But under the guidance of Const. Rutledge the opposite side of the river was reached. The night was stormy and very cold. When daylight came they pushed off again and started down stream amid the running ice which made navigation difficult. By dint of hard work Pine Island was reached on Sunday evening. A halt was made on Monday to refit. A good run was made on Tuesday when they had the pleasure of seeing Const. Hynes and guide Josie Alexander who had followed the river up from Battleford to see how they were progressing. Battleford

knew that the police were coming down the river because John Pambrun had been up as far as Fort Pitt and looking across the river could see no lights in the buildings. In the morning they saw that the doors and windows were broken. The only persons he could see were Little Poplar and Malcolm McDonald. Little Poplar talked across the river and told Pambrun that the police had gone down the river in a boat. McDonald was invited to come back but he said he couldn't as he was a prisoner. The next day they reached Battleford and were played by the police band to the stockade where all the neighborhood had gathered.

In a previous instalment it is said that Cowan, Leasby and Quinn left Fort Pitt to go scouting towards Frog Lake to try to locate the Indians a few days after the massacre but we have since discovered that the date they left Pitt was April 14th, twelve days after the massacre, and that Const. Cowan was killed on the 15th. It also shows that when Quinn, after spending the night on the river bank, came up to the fort in the dusk of the morning of the 16th the police were already across the

river, having left the fort in the late afternoon of the 15th.

**KILLED AT FROG LAKE, APRIL 2**

Thos. Quinn, from Minnesota, Indian Agent.

John Delaney, from near Ottawa, Farming Instructor.

John A. Gowanlock, Parkdale, Ont., Miller.

Geo. Dill, Huntsville, Ont., Storekeeper.

John Williscraft, Southampton, Ont., Carpenter.

Wm. C. Gilchrist, Woodville, Ont., Working at Gowanlock & Laurie's mill.

Chas. Gouin, California, Carpenter at Indian Agency.

Rev. Father Fafard, from Province of Quebec, Missionary at Frog Lake.

Rev. Father Marchand, from France, Missionary at Onion Lake.

**PRISONERS AT FROG LAKE**

W. B. Cameron, Clerk at H. B. C. store.

Jas. Simpson, H. B. C. store-keeper at Frog Lake.

Mrs Gowanlock, Tintern, Ont.

Mrs Delaney, Deschenes, near Ottawa.

John Fitzpatrick, Farming Instructor at Cold Lake.

G. Halpin, Moose Lake.

**KILLED AT FORT PITT, APRIL 15.**

Const. Cowan.

**WOUNDED, FORT PITT, APRIL 15**

Const. Loasby.

**PRISONERS AT FORT PITT**

W. J. McLean, H. B. C. Factor, wife and family.

F Stanley Simpson, H. B. C. employee.

Malcolm McDonald. "

Robert Hudson. "

Francois Dufresne. "

Rev. Father Legoff.

Rev Chas. Quinney, Church of England missionary at Onion Lake, and wife.

G. G. Mann, Farming Instructor at Onion Lake, wife and family.

J. B. Poirier.

Otto Dufresne.

Henry Quinn, blacksmith at Frog Lake and nephew of Indian Agent Quinn.

Isadore Pambrun and family.



# Fight At Fish Creek

The previous description of the fight at Fish Creek on April 24, 1885, was only what I had seen myself. As it was so limited in area I have copied a fuller description of the fight from—"On the March with the Little Black Devils" from the pen of R. Monroe St. John, a bugler of the 90th.

There was a lamentable scarcity of supplies and the General was thus greatly handicapped in his efforts to push forward. He determined to open another route for bringing in war materials. The Midland Battalion and a Gatling gun in charge of Lieut. Howard, and an extensive store of these goods for the campaign were started from Saskatchewan Landing, near Swift Current, to make the long journey down the river by boat.

So, day after day, Gen Middleton waited at Clarke's Crossing, knowing well that every day of such inaction was equivalent to giving aid and comfort to the rebel cause. Dumont was strengthening his position at Batoche, with the General powerless to attack him. Every day Riel's runners were carrying in-

to Indian camps all over the territory the news that the white men dared not attack them.

We were now in hostile territory, flash signals were observed at night.

Lord Melgund and Major Boulton with a party of scouts made a reconnaissance from Middleton's camp and captured three Indian spies.

Arrangements were got under way for an advance down the river towards Batoche. Scouts returned from Prince Albert with the news that all was safe and that Col. Irvine had 200 Mounted Police under him. Gen. Middleton, hearing that Riel's strength was only 400 men, divided his force into two columns, retaining command of the right column on the east side of the river.

The force was divided as follows: On the left or west bank of the river, under command of Col. Montizambert, with Lord Melgund as chief of staff, was the following force: French's Scouts, 25 men; Winnipeg Battery, 52 men; Royal Grenadiers, 250 men, teamsters, 80 men—making a total of 407.

The right column on the east

side of the river, with Lieut.-Col. Houghton as chief of the staff, was composed as follows: 90th Battalion, 304 men; 'A' Battery, 120 men; 'C' School of Infantry, 40 men; Boulton's Mounted Corps, 60 men; teamsters, 60 men—totalling 584.

This transfer of troops across the river was no easy task, as only two scows were available—one having purposely been brought from Siskatoon. The feat was achieved, however, and the two columns proceeded down the river, one on either side.

On the morning of April 23rd the Northcote, with reinforcements not having yet arrived, these two columns advanced down the Saskatchewan about a mile and one-half from the river banks on either side. By the first night they camped about 18 miles from Clarke's Crossing.

Early the next morning, April 24th, we resumed the march, Middleton was the right column on the east side had his first clash with the rebels at Fish Creek, where a small winding stream flowed through a deep ravine leading down into the river. The river which ran through the upland prairie in a sort of canyon, drained the country through which it ran by

means of creeks, ravines and coulees, which gathered the surface water into their deep, narrow channels. Many of these ravines and coulees were lined with stunted poplars, cottonwoods and grey willows, bluffs were numerous on the level uplands.

At a point close to the head of this Fish Creek ravine a small party of Indians and half breeds had entrenched themselves. A former battleground of the Crees and Blackfeet, it was well chosen for defence. Thickly covered with brush, this hidden position lay close to the main trail along which Middleton's force was advancing. Here, Dumont, Riel's lieutenant, with about 125 rebels lay waiting at the edge of this ravine or coulee near Fish Creek. His men, well concealed, were snugly stowed away behind boulders or hidden in the dense everglades of grey willow, birch and poplar. His instructions to his followers had evidently been to allow Middleton's main force to get past them before firing. But, the rebels mistook the advance guard of Boulton's Scouts for the main force and fired too soon.

Boulton's Scouts furnished the advance and flank guard. Of the finest type similar to those in



French's Corps, these homesteaders had been recruited by Major Boulton in the Birtle district. Self-reliant, their courage and resourcefulness was outstanding. 'F' Company of the 90th and 'C' School of Infantry forming the supports of the Mounted troops moved off early while the rest of the 90th and 'A' Battery, followed by the transport, took the route at a proper interval.

About 9.15 some considerable excitement manifested itself at the front; despatch riders galloped back. Our men were told to lie down and rest. An unusual order in the morning. The march was again resumed, the General rallying the boys on their quietness. "What about a little song, my men? Don't look so serious."

Instantly everybody relaxed and "Roll de Ol' Chariot along" burst forth as the General and his staff galloped off ahead.

Our song, however, soon came to an abrupt ending.

Crack! Crack! A loud volley of rifle fire smote our ears. Riderless horses galloping in all directions. What had happened was this. Two flanking troopers of Boulton's Scouts had noticed suspicious signs at the entrance to the ambush on the flank. The

rebels, thinking they were discovered, fired.

These wary Indians and buffalo hunters, well-trained in the art of strategy as they were, by firing too soon had not proved themselves clever enough for Boulton's Scouts. These gallant men, instead of galloping back in confusion when ambushed, threw themselves off their horses and started to pump bullets into the rebels. Driven back into the ravine at Fish Creek, they were thus held until the main body of troops had time to deploy for the attack.

The Metis had chosen the very finest place on the whole line of march for an ambush that might have ended, but for the vigilance and courage of Boulton's Scouts, in a regular slaughter of the surprised troops.

Concealed hunters cut down the troops of Braddock and Custer and many of our British columns were ambushed in the South African War.

With loud cheers the 90th extended into skirmishing order as they neared the ravine. Here puffs of smoke were already curling up, twenty of Diamond's men with Winchester firing over a natural parapet protected by big boulders.

The column was divided into two wings, the left consisting of "B" and "F" Companies of the 90th with Boulton's Mounted Corps, and the right comprising the rest of the 90th, "A" Battery and "C" School of Infantry. The left wing, "F" Company leading, came under fire first. The whole force formed a huge half-moon around the mouth of the ravine. The brush densely thick and, as rain was falling the smoke hung in clouds a few feet off the muzzles of the rifles.

At 10.35 "A" Battery with two field guns dashed up and at once opened fire on the ravine, where the rebels were concealed. The houses and barns in the vicinity were shattered to pieces; haystacks were set on fire. The rebels directed a terrific fire on the artillery, but were forced back in an attempted sortie on the guns.

Here the 90th lost heavily. Young Ferguson was the first to fall. The handmen came up and carried the injured to the rear, where the surgeon cared for them.

"B" Company of the 90th, under Captain Winda, guarded the wounded and ammunition.

General Middleton repeatedly expressed his admiration of the bearing of the 90th, but thought

they exposed themselves unnecessarily. The rebels, on the other hand, kept low.

At 11.45 Middleton ordered a general advance, the fighting, now at closer range, was very brisk. Just before this advance the General, through a signal officer, had ordered those companies on the other side of the river to come across. They had already heard the firing and had reached a point opposite. As before, their only means of transportation was a clumsy scow which had to be propelled with roughly improvised oars and which could carry only 60 men at a time. Yet, despite this handicap, 250 men, two guns and their weapons, fully horsed were brought safely over.

It was after 1 o'clock that the Grenadiers, led by Lord Melgund, with a rush and a cheer came up the river bank and took up their positions to the left of the ravine. They were soon followed by two other companies of the Grenadiers under Col. Grassett, and by two guns of the Winnipeg Field Battery. By 3 o'clock the rebel fire had almost ceased.

General Middleton declared that Dumont and his men were finer skirmishers and bush-fight-

ers than he had ever imagined them to be. The rebel movements appeared to have been directed by long low whistles, like the piping of a boatswain. Occasionally orders could be heard 'keep back,' 'go on,' 'this way,' 'fire lower,' 'fire higher,' etc., but grim silence was the general rule. They were truly marvellous in the speed with which some loaded their shot-guns with the old fashioned powder horns and paper wadding. Those with Winchester's ran from one part of the ravine to the other, as required.

Their buckshot made very ugly and painful wounds. Old style leaders balls were also fired with considerable effect. Had the rebels been armed with Sniders they would have, from their sheltered positions, wiped us out in short order.

The Canadian troops left 11 dead and 35 wounded. General Middleton had a bullet through his cap and his two A.D.C.'s were wounded. The rebels were supposed to have suffered losses of 14 dead, including three Indians, and 18 wounded.

The fatal ravine, seen afterwards, proved an almost impregnable stronghold. Rifle pits, dug like steps, were all the way

up a heavily wooded precipitous bank. These pits pointing up the hills were all along the declivity, there were from three to five in a row, forming the finest of covers. Farther up the stream, over 50 fine horses lay dead in the ravine.

Near the trail which crossed the creek lay the body of a massive Teton Sioux brave, hideous in war-paint. The body of a young Cree warrior, Chief Bear-dy's son-in-law who had been shot through the heart, being suspended over a precipice by a dead tree.

About 6 o'clock, the half-breeds having retired from the field of action, the troops were assembled and marched to a camping site near the Saskatchewan River. Here our tents were hastily set up and thoughts of food were not unwelcome. From 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. our men had nothing to eat, save a few pickled pieces of hard tack.

There had been considerable rain during the fighting and in the night it started to freeze and snow. At midnight the whole battalion were ordered out on picket duty for the night.

I had lost my blankets during the day. By day they had been taken for the dead and wounded.

So, until I secured more blankets, I passed some very cold nights.

The next day we had a funeral parade and buried our dead, a great pile of stones being placed over the grave. Later, the bodies were removed to the St. John cemetery, north of Winnipeg, a public funeral being accorded these brave volunteers. After waiting in vain for the Northcote the wounded were finally despatched to Saskatoon. Improvised ambulances were made by stretching fresh-killed cow hides across wagon boxes where they were lashed with wagon thongs. Here at the hospital the injured were given every attention.

The casualties were:

#### KILLED

##### "A" BATTERY

Gunner Demanocilly

" Cook

" Ainsworth

##### BOULTON'S SCOUTS

Pte. D'Arcy Baker

##### "C" SCHOOL OF INFANTRY

Pte. Arthur Watson

##### 90th BATTALION

Lieut. Swinford

Pte. Hutchinson, No 1 Co.

" Ferguson,

" Ennis, No. 4 Co.

" Wheeler

#### WOUNDED

##### HEADQUARTERS STAFF

Capt. Wise, A D C.

Lieut. Doucet, A.D.C.

##### BOULTON'S SCOUTS

Capt. Gardner

Lieut. Bruce

Pte. Porin

" King

" Langford

##### "A" BATTERY

Sergt-Major Mawhinney

Bombardier Taylor,

Gunner Asselune

" Emeye

Driver Harrison

##### "C" SCHOOL OF INFANTRY

Col-Sergt. Cummings

Pte. Dunn

" H. Jones

" J. Jones

##### 90th BATTALION

Capt. Clarke

Corp. Lethbridge

" Code, C. Co

" Thecker

" Browa

Pte. Kemp

" Hartop

" Blackwood, C Co.

" Mathews, A Co.

" Lovell

" Hi-top, F Co.

" Canniff, C Co.

" Chambers

" Bouchette

" Swan

" Wilson

" Mansell

" Woodman

##### 10th ROYAL GRENADIERS

Pte. Wheeling, knees dislocated

" Lane

# Cut Knife Hill Fight

Battleford at the time of the Rebellion in 1885 was on the south side of the Battle River. A. Macdonald having moved his store across to the north side in the fall of 1884, the residents of the town had begun to move across. All the government buildings were on the south side but the Mounted Police barracks were on the north of the Battle River, just east of the new barracks, where it had been located in 1876. The barracks had been occupied by quite a number of police and was surrounded by a ten foot stockade about 90 yards by 100 yards but having sent twenty five men to Fort Pitt and two drafts to Carlton as the trouble seemed to be among the half-breeds at Batoche. When the Indians around Battleford rose in rebellion in support of Riel, there were only twenty-five police in the barracks with one bronze muzzle loading 7-pounder. By building a bastion at one corner of the stockade this gun assisted in covering two faces of the fort. The balance of the twenty-five, after the gun crew was deducted, had almost a quarter mile of stockade to defend.

The civilian population was principally in the divided town of Battleford. Three families were at Prongue, a few families on the north side of the Saskatchewan, Oliver's mill on the north of the river at the mouth of the Turtle River, half a dozen families on the east of Moosomin's Reserve and a larger settlement at Hiesaylor. Of the latter only the residents along the Saskatchewan River came into the barracks, the remainder going into Poundmaker's camp. As fast as any settlers came into the barracks they were enrolled in the Homeguards or the Battleford Rifles. There were not enough rifles to go around. There were about 200 men and big boys in the barracks all together, the balance being women and children.

A few days after Gen. Middleton left Qu'Appelle with the 90th Batt and the Winnipeg Field Battery, the Queen's Own and Royal Grenadiers arrived from Toronto. Each unit was about 250 strong. By this time the anxiety about Battleford had become very strong and the Queen's Own, one half of "C" School of Infantry, the company of Otis-

wa Sharpshooters and "B" Battery of Artillery were sent on to Swift Current where they were joined by a body of Mounted Police from Calgary. From Swift Current this force proceeded across the prairie about two hundred miles to Battleford. It did the hearts good of those in the barracks to hear the bugles of the soldiers when they went into camp about three miles from the barracks near the end of April.

The following description of the fight at Cut Knife Hill, written by one of those present at the fight, says: -

At 3 p.m. on the 1st of May, a flying column consisting of 75 men of the North-West Mounted Police, 80 men of "B" Battery Royal Canadian Artillery with two 7 pounder R.M.L. guns and one Gatling, 45 men of C Co Canadian Infantry, 50 men of Queen's Own Rifles, 20 men of Captain Todd's Ottawa Sharpshooters, and 50 men of the Rattler Rifles, under Lieut.-Col. Otter's command, with Lieut.-Col. Herchmer as Chief of Staff, proceeded from Battleford to punish a Cree chief named Poundmaker, the men of whose band had committed several murders and depredations in the neighborhood.

Owing to the distance of the Indian camp (thirty miles) and the necessity for rapid transit in an attack of this description, all the infantry were conveyed in waggons, the entire train, including rations and forage, numbering forty-eight.

The column advanced rapidly through a difficult country, the mounted police worked admirably as a cavalry screen (preceded by a few scouts) under command of Capt. P. R. Neale. This duty was a particularly trying one, on account of the numerous ravines and sloughs with which the country is interspersed, and which would have formed excellent ambuscade for the enemy.

A halt was made at 7.30 p.m. to enable the men to have their supper, and also to await the rising of the moon, without which it would have been impossible to follow the trail. This halt was very pleasantly enlivened by the singing of the men, who were in the highest spirits at the prospects of a brush with the enemy. Picquets were of course thrown out to guard the corral of waggons from surprise.

At 11 p.m., the moon having risen, the column again moved forward and advanced steadily throughout a chilly night, trying

to both mounted men and men cramped up in waggons.

The column had to trust considerably to luck for the first three hours, as the bush was so thick that it was impossible to extend the mounted advance guard and infantry would have been too slow for the purpose, as the camp was known to be still at a great distance. Soon, however, the open prairie was reached, and the troops moved on at an accelerated pace in the chilly dawn. At four the sun rose and cheered the men with its bright rays. The guides now left the trail and advanced in a south westerly direction towards the supposed position of the enemy. Nothing, however could be discovered but a few cattle grazing on the distant hills beyond a thickly wooded creek.

Here a slight pause was made in the advance of the column, while the police cautiously advanced to thoroughly search the copses on the banks and find a suitable ford. Close by were seen the traces of a recently abandoned camp on which had stood at least five hundred Indian lodges, which showed that the Indian force was large.

A ford having been found, the scouts, closely followed by the

police, and the Battery under Major Short, advanced up a rising ground interspersed by ravines (or coulees), the remainder of the train moved gradually down to the ford, which of necessity entailed a slight straggling of the infantry, who got off the waggons to cross the creek on a hastily improvised bridge.

Onward advanced the scouts up a very steep hill to gain the crest, from which it was expected the enemy's encampment might be seen. No sooner had they reached the summit than a murderous fire was open on them from the further side by the Indians, at a range of not more than thirty yards. The police instantly dismounted and extended at the double, gaining cover as they went. The galling gun was brought up and unlimbered, when it was charged by the Indians. Major Short, hastily collecting a few police, and his artillerymen who had gained the crest, made a gallant counter charge and drove the enemy back, not, however without serious loss.

In the meantime the remainder of the men hurried up, formed, and extended rapidly.

It was at this moment that the commanding officer obtained the

an idea of the position and the forces by which he was opposed.

To the front was a sort of horseshoe, the summit of which was being pluckily held by a few of all arms, covering the galling, which had now come into action, while the seven-pounders were being brought up to shell the numerous copses which fringed the further edge of the horseshoe. To the right ran a deep ravine, the edge of which was immediately occupied to prevent a flank attack; while the left, overlooking a valley with splendid cover for the enemy's rifles, was similarly and handsomely protected. Thus the whole force came immediately into action, without supports or reserves, forming two lines, the rear of which rested on the recently forded creek when the waggons were brought up between and quickly corralled in a slight depression, fairly covered from the enemy's galling fire, the cavalry and artillery horses being protected in a like manner a little farther in front.

The enemy's fire at this period was not only raking the left line, but bullets of high elevation were dropping in the rear of those on the right. On the left front a high ridge on which could be discerned several mounted figures,

must have afforded a splendid view for the tactical arrangements of the enemy, as the whole position lay like a map at their feet. To the right of this ridge, and in a wide and elevated ravine, the Indians' lodges were plainly seen and immediately shelled by the artillery, causing immense confusion there; the howling of the cattle as they were hastily driven off being plainly heard above the heavy firing. Two or three Indians who had been killed in the first rush were lying near the guns, and our wounded were being quickly conveyed by the Queen's Own Ambulance Corps, under the charge of Brigade-Surgeon Strange and Surgeon Leslie, to the centre of the corral, where they were protected by bags of oats from the dropping fire.

The enemy were now completely hidden in the numerous thickets, the puff of smoke, followed by the sharp whistle of the Winchester bullets, being the only indication of their presence, except where here and there the swarthy form of a dusky savage rose up to deliver his fire, to be immediately boxed over by some of our rifles; they, however, succeeded in creeping up towards the guns when they were dislodged.



ed by a second charge under the gallant Major Short, who seemed throughout the day to bear a charmed life. One Indian emptied his rifle at him when within a few yards, but only managed to put a ball through his cap and then fell by a shot from Short's revolver and was clubbed to death by the Artillery cook, a genuine Parisian.

The brief rush gained for us a second ridge which was determinedly held by a small party under Sergeant-Major Whelan, of the North-West Mounted Police. At this time Lieut. Brock, of the Queen's Own Rifles, observed some of the enemy endeavoring to cut us off from the ford, and taking a few men quickly occupied a low ridge and succeeded in preventing this manoeuvre, not without loss.

Indians mounted could be seen galloping all round the position out of range, and the entire force was now occupied in checking as far as possible the rifle fire all most encircling the whole position and in shelling the covers, while the staff moved freely about, notwithstanding the heavy fire aimed at them by the enemy's marksmen. Lieut. Sears, of the 18th South Staffordshire (Eng.) Regiment; Acting Brigade Ma-

jor, had his sleeve cut off by a bullet.

Throughout the whole action the lives of the officers seemed to be miraculously spared, as they afforded a splendid mark by their distinctive uniforms.

Another short rush was then made at the right front by a few artillery, police, and regular infantry, and another small ridge gained in the direction of the enemy's camp.

It was now about 10 a.m., and it must, with justice to the troops be noted that they had had no meal since the previous evening, and had travelled throughout the whole of the cold night.

All this time the left flank and part of the right had been gallantly held by the Queen's Own, under Capt. Brown; the Battleford Rifles, Capt. Nash; and Lieut. Gray's Ottawa Sharpshooters; and they all behaved throughout the day with the steadiness of tried veterans—a wounded man of the Queen's Own Rifles being carried under cover by Private Acheson of the first-named corps under a very heavy fire, while at another point Col. Herchmer and Trooper Rutledge brought in the body of one their men under similar circumstances.

From this period it seemed almost impossible to make any further advance, more especially as the two seven-pounders became partially disabled, owing to their trails, which were old wooden ones, breaking, and consequently the infantry could not cross the open space without the moral effects of a few shells on the enemy. The position was therefore held with very slight alterations for another hour, during which the tired men in many instances went to sleep with the bullets whistling over and around them.

Later, a further advance was made to occupy some woods on the right. This was accomplished by Lieut. Wadmore, regular Infantry, Sergt.-Major Wattam, North-West Mounted Police, and Staff-Sergt. Newby, of Governor-General's Foot Guards, and a small party of all arms. This party was now within fifty yards of the enemy's camp, which was by this time, however, totally deserted, the Indians having commenced to move off in a south-westerly direction under cover.

Up to this time a small knoll, well wooded, on the left rear, had been dangerously threatening the ford, and it was necessary to dislodge them to keep open the trail to Battleford by which

the column had to return; consequently a party of scouts in charge of Trooper Ross, of the mounted police was detailed to drive them out at any cost, and this they succeeded in effectually doing.

It must be mentioned that during this pause, the guns having been temporarily repaired, some splendid artillery practice was made, a party of Indians being dismounted by a shell at fifteen hundred yards from a gun laid by Major Short, the horse of one of the Indians was seen towards our position and was recognized as one of the police horses stolen by Indians on the evacuation of Fort Pitt.

The guns being again disabled and the fire of the enemy having almost entirely ceased, Lieut.-Col. Otter ordered the column to return to Battleford. It consequently fell back with proper precautions reaching Battleford at 11 p.m., having marched eighty miles in thirty-two hours, seven of which were spent in action without rest or food, losing six killed and sixteen wounded, the enemy's loss being estimated at a hundred killed and wounded, many bodies lying in our position throughout the engagement. It was evident, from the fact that

not a solitary brave even fired on  
or followed the retiring column.  
that their chastisement was se-  
vere, as those best acquainted

with the enemy's tactics are of  
opinion that had they not been  
thoroughly cowed desultory  
fighting would have ensued.



# The Charge At Batoche

The notes of the four days at Batoche in 1885 which brought to an end the participation of the Halfbreeds in the Rebellion is taken from a report written by a bugler of the 90th and seems to be very correct.

On May 7th, with Middleton's whole division in camp, the advance was begun, and hopes were entertained that soon the rebellion would be over. The prolonged stay at Fish Creek had also enabled the General to procure some valuable information regarding the lay of the land. Fortunate indeed for our troops, as Dumont had turned the whole district into a rabbit warren, full of pitfalls and ambushes.

At 4 a.m. we left camp, where the teamsters and luggage remained in the zareba. The trail lay through a bushy country in which the rebels were supposed to be hidden. After passing Dumont's Crossing, the first camp that evening was made half a mile from the famous Gabriel Dumont's house. In this rebel territory there were three crossings of the Saskatchewan, upper one was Clark's, next Dumont's, and the third, Batoche.

Scouts scoured the country to right and left of the advancing troops, who went in the following order;

Boulton's Scouts, 75 men; Gatling gun, under Capt Howard. 4 men; Royal Grenadiers, 262 men; 90th Batt 275 men, Midland Batt. 116 men; A Battery (two guns) 95 men, Winnipeg Field Battery, (two guns) 10 men; French's Scouts, (on flanks) 30 men, Hospital and ammunition wagons, a total of 917 men.

At Dumont's Crossing there was a little excitement caused by a large number of Mounted Scouts galloping through the camp in pursuit of rebel scouts. as we left here, our men were fired upon.

Next morning we resumed our march, making a long detour, for on the regular trail to Batoche, the Indians had established numbers of rifle pits. Leaving the steep banks of the river, at length we found ourselves about nine miles from Batoche, where we camped for the night. Here during the night the pickets had an exciting time challenging cattle. Somewhere in this part of the trail I noticed a

large number of beef cattle had been added to our transport train. I spotted some dressed beef and helped myself to a slice. Like all young animals, filling my stomach was a subject to which I gave frequent and earnest consideration.

On the morning of Saturday, May 9th, we resumed our march bright and early. At 7 o'clock we reached the outskirts of Batoche village, the rebel stronghold.

The fighting around Batoche lasted through four days, from the morning of Saturday, May 9th, until the evening of Tuesday, May 12th. The stiffest fighting was done and the heaviest losses sustained on the first and last of these days. It was on the 12th that the famous advance of our whole line was made, which completed the rout of the rebels and left the troops in possession of Batoche.

It was arranged while we were at Dumont's Crossing that the steamer *Northcote*, which was loaded with supplies, should run the gauntlet, co-operating with the main force after the troops had arrived on the high ground above Batoche. A code of signals by whistles and answering shots was agreed upon.

The position the rebels had chosen was one admirably suited for an effective defence. The river which here took several turns had precipitous densely wooded banks which scarred with ravines, pitched down irregularly to the level of the river below. Here was afforded every shelter to the rebels. The valley of the Saskatchewan is at this place 140 feet in depth and more than a mile wide.

Batoche thus lay in a basin surrounded on three sides by hills with the South Saskatchewan river on the west. The settlement was an old one, the original trading post having been founded by one Batoche, as early, it is said, as 1825. In 1885 it was still a busy post, with a group of houses which now served as headquarters for the rebel chieftain, Louis Riel. A cable ferry connected the two banks of the river. Some distance back from the river up the valley in the direction from which our troops had approached, stood the frame weather-beaten church of St. Anthony of Padua around which some of the hottest fighting later occurred. Nearby stood a two storey school. Towards the river, but still some considerable distance from the village

was a cemetery, which was held during the greater part of four days by our volunteer forces. Down from the brow of the hill past the church and school, zig-zagging through scrub and timber to the village below, wound a steep narrow trail. Across the river were several small log houses of half-breed settlers.

This rugged semi-circle, wooded, ravined and steep, that the rebels had chosen for their stand, was fortified with a skul that commanded the admiration of General Middleton. Between the village of Batoche down by the river and the church up toward the hill, there had been placed three lines of rifle pits. Some were small, holding two men, while a few were large enough to hold ten or twelve riflemen. They were screened by poplar trees, and in some cases the trunks of larger trees had been built up, with openings cut for rifle fire.

And so, on the morning of Saturday the 9th the Northcote and our troops were ready for the fray. As it happened the men she carried were to come first under fire. At our camp at Fish Creek, she was converted in a rough way, into a floating fortress. By stacking sacks of oats,

boxes of bully beef and biscuits around the sides, boiler plates around the pilot house, she was thus converted into a supposed gun-boat. On board were a small force—C School of Infantry and some rifle men from the 90th and Grenadiers, besides a few non-combatants, wounded men and two newspaper correspondents. The boat was to proceed down the river and there await the advance of Middleton on Batoche, then at a signal, engaging the rebels to the south of the settlement and thus by making a diversion, to assist the troops on land. The first shot was fired on her by the rebels, and as she rounded the first curve, she was raked fore and after by volley after volley from both banks. The only thing to do then was to run the gauntlet. Caught now in the swing of the rapid, the craft completely riddled with bullets swept down to the ferry. Here the rebels had purposely lowered the steel cable and with full force the Northcote struck it. Crash! went the smokestacks. A wild cheer went up from both banks. Away went the whistle with the pipes. Communication with Middleton by the code of whistling signals was thereby cut off. Hampered

by heavy barges, the Northcote avoided two boulders by swinging around and floating stern foremost down stream. But for the withering fire of our men on the steamer, the barge would have been boarded by the rebels. For five miles the Northcote had weathered the enemy's hail of bullets. Drifting for awhile before the anchor caught, the damage was repaired at great risk to the workmen. Signalling with Middleton was resumed but with no replies. The Northcote was definitely out of the fight. Finally, the steamer reached the Hudson's Bay Ferry, 22 miles below Batoche.

The General's naval project did little more than imperil many valuable lives and withdrew from his forces a considerable number of brave soldiers who were badly needed in the fighting line.

So much for the epic of the Northcote!

And so, while our little "gun-boat" was staggering under its baptism of fire, up on high ground the troops, who already by eight o'clock had heard the first signal whistle of the Northcote, answered it with volleys of blank cartridges from the Winnipeg Field Battery.

The Battle of Batoche had

started! As we approached the settlement, the Gatling gun fired at the first house, but with no response. Our scouts fell back, and A Battery sent a shell through the second house. Some rebels who had been in a ravine behind the house ran into the bush. The two houses took fire and were soon in ashes. Farther on a door open a white cloth waved in the wind. Then, as we neared the Church of St. Antoine de Padua, which with the school house stood about 200 yards from the high bank of the river, the General called out in French, for the inmates to come out. In this frightened group, besides four French priests, were five Sisters of Charity who had charge of a number of women and children belonging to the rebels. From the priests the General learned that the enemy numbered about two hundred half breeds and Indians, equally divided by the river. The half-breeds, it was also learned, were entirely without flour, sugar and tea and their ammunition was supposed to be low.

The A Battery then fired at some brilliantly-painted tepees and some houses down below. Ah, that brought them out. Scurrying over the hills in great

haste, they fled, women and children being in the majority.

As we stood watching them, in retreat, as we thought one of our guns several times missed fire. Fiendish whoops from the ravine greeted this mishap, there came a rush of rebels through the scrub below us and a hail of bullets flew over our heads. The heavy guns were ordered to retire; one of them, coming up the ravine, snagged in a tree stump and was caught fast. At this delay heavy fire came from the rifle pits and the enemy rushed to capture the gun.

A surprise party, however, was in store for the adventurous rebels, most of whom happened to be Indians.

Capt Howard, with his pet "Gat" advanced, reloaded the open at the church and opened a withering fire of lead upon the enemy, with a "take that, and that, and that, you devils" accompanying every turn of the crank.

With the flying ends of their blankets rapidly disappearing in the bush, the astounded Indians fled to their places of concealment. Once there, showers of lead poured again on the brave fellows around the Gatling, but eventually their strenuous efforts silenced the enemy.

I saw the gun crew as they came out of the ravine and from learned the particulars of their lively skirmish.

A fine target for concealed marksmen, Howard had turned the crank as coolly as if giving an exhibition. That our men had all escaped death or wounds was a miracle. Captain Howard, who was loudly cheered that evening, with his Gatling certainly saved the men from serious disaster.

An ivory-handled sword ground down to form a long knife, the Stars and Stripes engraved on the handle, the extremity of the handle being an eagle.

Such was the trophy found by Captain Howard on the body of a dead Indian warrior, one of several left, torn and shattered in the brush. The Captain said undoubtedly it was an American officer's sword about which the Sioux had made such a boast when they captured it several years before.

A ghastly trophy of Indian warfare - a grim reminder of fiendish massacres perpetrated in the United States upon soldiers and settlers alike. Massacres upon which was patterned a few years later in '85, that cruel butchery at Frog Lake when



these blood-thirsty assassins, after fraternizing with the renegade Indians of Montana, returned to Saskatchewan, there to become ring-leaders in the Indian uprising.

After the ravine incident the sharpshooters of the 90th, armed with Martin-Henry rifles, and some men of A battery were ordered to lie down and fire over the crest of the rising ground into the ravine and the bush on the river. In front of the church and in the open plain the main body of the 90th were deployed to protect our right centre, threatened by a row of rebel riflemen, and also to support our left centre and left. Next to them was the Midland Battalion and then the Grenadiers and Mounted men. The artillery and Gatling gun were in various places during the day.

The wounded men were now being carried into the church where their injuries were attended to. The fighting was becoming increasingly hot in the space between the church and the school, the rebels potting away at everyone who passed.

Until noon, B Company to which I belonged, lay in the open between the church and the cemetery. The enemy fire was

heavy, and as we had no cover, we endeavored to dig sod with our sword bayonets and make a small parapet.

Then, about noon we were moved to the steep bank of the river, thus holding the extreme left flank of the line. In front of us was the river, on the right the ravine, and above us the cemetery.

Lying in the brush facing the ravine I could see nothing to shoot at. Suddenly, at my right and higher up I noticed a man in civilian clothes. He advanced towards the ravine and fired several shots down below him. After he had retired behind me, there came rifle bullets evidently intended for this man, but directed right at me. I saw where each one struck close to me.

Ah, that one got me. Oh, Dickson, I'm shot, I called out to the color-sergeant near me.

I could feel no pain, but I thought the nerves in the injured part must be numbed. However, after very gingerly feeling myself all over I decided I had not been hit. But—I did find a hole in my clothing made by one of the passing bullets. So that particular rebel wasn't such a poor marksman after all.

Reassured by this personal

examination I then, like a young fool, stood straight up to see if I locate the source of the fire. There, only a stone's throw away, erect and tall, with his rifle at the port, and gazing up the hill at the spot from which the civilian had fired, was a blanketed Indian.

Was I startled? Then I let go at him from the hip and dropped flat on the ground. That Indian in the white blanket was the only one of the fighting rebels that I actually saw at close range, in five days of action and two battles.

As night came on the troops were ordered to retire about a quarter of a mile back on the trail where the transport had built a zarcha. Hurried breast-works with earth and poplar trees were thrown up in our rear. As soon as this was done, fires were lighted and food hurriedly prepared. The Gatling kept firing quickly to cover the retreat of the troops from the church. The right of the line retired first; the left, E Company where I happened to be placed, came last. But the enemy, with loud war-whoops and shrill yells, thinking we were retreating, closed in upon us on all sides. We had retired in good order, delivering volley after volley at the rebels, but when we

reached the corral the situation was dangerous.

Here we were exposed on the face of a bare hill — the wagons our only protection, and the horses in danger of stampeding. Closer and closer came the yelling rebels maintaining a steady fire until after ten o'clock.

Twilight had lingered with us until 9 o'clock, then, as black night closed in upon the camp, the air seemed charged with something sinister.

In its murky depths there skulked that unseen enemy, whose devastating fire at intervals warned us of ominous possibilities. The smoke from the underbrush fires kindled during the afternoon still hung like a pall over the camp and rolled away over the river.

Ki-yi-ki-yi came the call of the Indians. At midnight another fusillade of lead. Then comparative quiet from the enemy.

A frenzied scene inside the corral earlier in the evening had rather appalled us. What if the Indians should practice their favorite trick of stampeding the enemy's cattle. They were already uneasy — stamping around — six hundred mules and horses and eighty cattle.

A stampede. We had no de-

fence against frightened animals, cooped up within a small space. What would those flying hoofs not do to us. The frightened, nervous teamsters were yelling at their dumb charges, equally nervous; men were throwing up hasty entrenchments; bullets were whizzing over our heads or plunging the ground beside us—cooped up, we furnished a good mark for the enemy sharpshooters; doctors were busy dressing wounds in the hospital, for one had been killed and five wounded in the zareba.

In a trench or under wagons lay our men, striving to get a little rest. Cold and dank was the bare ground, for some of us had no blankets. I, for one, had no covering, my blankets having been appropriated as they had been after the battle of Fish Creek. Some who could not sleep lay for a while talking, gazing up into the blackness of the night. We wondered what those at home were doing—how long the rebels could last—how soon would we be on the march back to home, sweet home.

Young Buchanan, the drummer boy of the 90th band, as he lay under a wagon, spoke regretfully of the business he had left, that of selling papers on the Win-

nipeg streets, and what chances he was even losing of selling special war-editions of the "Sun".

Up at 4 o'clock on Sunday morning, May 10th, a film of ice on the water pails; our men were weary from lack of sleep and stiff with rheumatism.

At 6 o'clock we were once more in skirmishing order to repel the rebels who were quite ready for us, potting us all day from places of concealment. At evening, moving figures could be seen in the woods ahead of us. I was sent back to camp with news and thus broke up a church service which was being held by the Rev D. M. Gordon. That night we again resumed our places in the trench.

Monday morning saw us once more marching out, our line of skirmishers a little further on the right, the 90th this time occupying the centre, with the Martini-Henri men well to the front. We succeeded in advancing considerably further than on the previous day, but as no order from the General came for a further advance, we again retired under a hot fire from the rebels.

Great dissatisfaction was now being expressed by both men and officers with the plan of operation adopted by General Middleton, which exposed our men to

the fire of an unseen enemy without giving them the opportunity of reprisal. But that seasoned old soldier for one thing wanted to know the extent and strength of the enemy's position before risking the lives of his men. To obtain this knowledge the brave general himself made many dangerous reconnaissances, with some hair breadth escapes.

However, upon the solicitation of the higher officers, the General finally consented to a charge. On Monday, May 12th, about 2 o'clock our line, therefore, was formed; on the extreme left were two companies of the Midland Battalion under Col. Williams accompanied by French's Scouts, the left centre was taken by the Grenadiers under Col. Grassett, accompanied by Major Young of Winnipeg; in the right centre and right were the 90th boys under Majors McKeand and Boswell, while on the extreme right were the cavalry and Scouts under Col. Boulton and Capt. Dennis. And we must not forget Captain Howard and his irrepressible Gatling.

The word was passed along from left to the right—from the Midlands to the Grenadiers. Our line extended probably a mile or more

"Are you ready to charge?" With a loud ringing cheer, amid a shower of bullets, our troops obeyed the order to "charge" and rushed down the steep slope of the ravine, firing as they ran.

With a rush our men reached the pits, where the rebels repulsed us with fierce firing.

I personally saw no one to fire at, but a tremendous hail of bullets whizzed both ways over my head. We pressed on and finally we reached Batoche.

As our men charged down the the ravine, a man mounted on horseback and bearing a white flag came rapidly riding up the road to the church. He was Mr. Astley, one of Riel's prisoners who had been sent in with a flag of truce to deliver a message from Riel to General Middleton. In it, the rebel chief threatened, that if the firing did not cease, the white prisoners he held, mostly victims of the Duck Lake and other raids, would be massacred.

But so rapid and effective was the rush of the troops that Riel and his leaders had neither time nor opportunity to carry his threat into execution.

Our boys cleared the pits of surprised rebels and no quarter was shown nor asked. Almost simultaneously our left and right

wings entered the town, the Midlands and Grenadiers coming along the river to the houses, and the scouts and 90th to the stores. Here the fighting continued very hot for awhile; the rebels, still stubbornly resisting, finally turned and fled, being pursued by our cavalry two miles down the river.

The red coats of the Midlands and the Grenadiers, and the dark green coats of the 90th were so intermingled that the glory of getting there first was fairly divided.

Capt. French, the gallant leader of French's Scouts, in his eagerness to be the first to enter Batoche's house, there met his death. Throwing open an upstairs window facing the river, a bullet fired from across the stream pierced his heart, and he fell dead on the floor.

When we came to a new store building, a number of my company entered it. I remained outside. Here, in a dungeon, dark and foul, there had been imprisoned six white men who had been kept by Riel for nearly two months. Imprisoned in various places, miserably fed, threatened by death a number of times, their massacre demanded by a party of Sioux who danced and beat their

drums above them. Then, finally confined in this loathsome cellar, about 16 feet square and nine feet deep, mud floors and walls with no ventilation nor light, they were told that they all would meet death the same evening that our troops arrived.

Our boys found a pole wedged in between the trap door and the ceiling, also on the door were many large stones. Opening the trap door, the soldiers saw white faces emerging from the gloom. Imagine the joy of the poor fellows when they spied our uniforms. Strong ready hands pulled them out of their prison, until all stood blinking in the unaccustomed daylight. God bless you, boys, they said over and over. We were to have been shot to-night. I saw them when they emerged, wan and emaciated, but so nervously overjoyed that they wanted to shake hands with us all. All the other prisoners were soon liberated also.

Beyond the buildings in Batoche was a heavily wooded section near the river bank and trail. Here the rebels had placed their women and children in dug-outs roofed over with blankets, branches and other covers for protection against bullets. Huddled together under carts and in tents, these

families were badly scared, but were reassured by the kindly soldiers who helped them pack their belongings into their carts and started them on their way.

A great number of their comfortable homes had been destroyed. Four days had swept away the results of patient labor and thrift. A pitiful sight; some women saw their husbands taken away to answer for crimes that they had been led into in foolish, yet blind confidence in their rampant leaders. Riel, the arch-rebel was still at large, but the scouts were fast closing on his trail.

We camped in the village for the night. The next morning large numbers of the rebels surrendered, all were allowed their liberty except Riel's Counsel, who were still at large. Later, Gabriel Dumont and Dumas, experienced plainsmen, escaped to the United States. Louis Riel, who remained in hiding for several days, was captured by two scouts. This occurred at the second camp out from Batoche. The rebel chief was lodged in a tent next to the General's, was well guarded and placed in charge of Capt. Young, of Winnipeg, who escorted him to Regina.

May 13th was occupied by our boys in roaming around Batoche

village, getting much needed supplies of this and that from the houses of the rebels. We also selected souvenirs to take home to our families. But I must not omit something; an incident that stands out to this day as the most pleasurable event of May 13th, our last day at Batoche.

Talk about a Lucullan banquet! Coffee with an aroma like nectar and real smoked bacon, crisp and savory our fare that day we sojourned in the village of Batoche. To soldiers whose daily rations for so long had been a monotonous round of hard-tack and sow-belly, this was indeed ambrosia. While we are on the subject of food in one of the upstairs rooms in which a number of Riel's prisoners were confined, they had written on the walls the menus of what they facetiously called "Riel's Hotel". One menu read bannocks, cowhide, bulls feet and slough water discolored with tea.

In the engagements at Batoche our troops had a total of 9 killed and 30 wounded (McJvaney). The rebel loss in killed and wounded was never really known, but Rev. Father Touze of the Mission estimated it to be around 157.

At this period the siege of Batielford had been raised by Gen.

Otter and the engagement at Cut Knife had taken place.

But now by May 14th, Pound-maker was still in the field, and unaware of the victory at Batoche. His next move on the very day that Batoche was captured was to seize a train of supplies on its way to Gen. Otter at Battleford and keep the teamsters as prisoners. Big Bear, still at large, was however, in some ways the most formidable of the leaders at this period of the rebellion. He had a

large following and his battleground, with its lakes, muskegs, brushwood and climate had many natural advantages that favored him. Gen. Strange and his column were trailing this doughty warrior in the north.

On May 14th, therefore, we were again on the march, arriving the same day at Guardupuy's Crossing. Here, in this vicinity, Louis Riel was brought in by scouts and arrangements made to send him to Regina.



# From Batoche to Pitt

On the morning of the 14th of May they left Batoche and arrived at Guardupuy's Crossing, eighteen miles down the river, in the afternoon. During the day rumors had spread of the capture of Riel and when about half past three in the afternoon the report was verified the enthusiasm of the men knew no bounds. Three daring scouts came upon him and three companions about three miles north of Batoche. He surrendered without a struggle and accompanied his captors to the general's camp. His appearance was haggard and careworn in the extreme. Fear lest some of the troops should kill him had evidently taken possession of his mind. After an interview with Gen. Middleton he was placed in charge of Capt. Young and sent to Regina where he arrived on 23rd of May. The barracks was turned into a prison, where we will leave him for the present.

Dumont, the real fighting leader, was still at large and obstinate. A courier from Batoche to Prince Albert met him and advised him to surrender, but he declared his intentions of defending his freedom to the death. Through many

dangers he eluded the vigilance of the scouts and eventually escaped across the lines. Although the half-breeds were thus effectually defeated, no definite estimate up to this time could be made of the magnitude of the Indian rising which the rebellion had set on foot.

Poundmaker, although crippled by his encounter with Col. Otter at Cut Knife Creek, was still at large and unaware of the victory at Batoche.

Crossing the Battleford trail he had fallen upon a train of supplies on the way to Battleford and captured the teamsters and carried off the supplies in triumph. Big Bear, also, was still formidable, not only in the number of his following, but also in the natural advantages of his chosen battleground. Lakes, muskegs, brushwood and climate all conspired to make his punishment a work at once dangerous and difficult in the extreme. Some measure of humane treatment one might reasonably expect for small detachments falling into the hands of the half-breeds; none whatever could be hoped for at the hands of savages almost demons in their



ingenuity in contriving tortures when roused. With the experience of the United States to judge from, the end might appear far off. Indeed, at the beginning of the rebellion the fear of a general Indian war was most dreaded.

On Friday morning, May 13, Gen. Middleton's command crossed the river at Guardapuy's Crossing and took the trail for Prince Albert, where they arrived without further incident. The next day Chiefs Beardy and Okemassis held a wow wow with the General and were profuse in their protestations of loyalty. It will be remembered that both chiefs were present at the Duck Lake fight. Indeed, it was on their reserve that the fight took place. The General cross-questioned them severely, gave them a sharp reprimand, declared he would have them deposed, refused their request for provisions and left in disgust. These pow-wows became numerous after Batoche and the General was said to acquit himself with credit at all of them. The following extract from a private letter graphically describes the scene on the arrival of the Indian chiefs to pay homage to the commander of Her Majesty's forces.

It is a most laughable sight to

see the processions of peaceful Indians coming into camp, whenever we are, under the white flag, just like phytog processions. Long trains of Red River carts heard long before they are seen, preceded by mounted guys, highly ornamented, ochre paint, long hair strung with beads, feather head dresses (but a pot hat catches their fancy), bead worked trousers, moccasins, knivesheaths, a few bags, etc., no two alike, small ponies dragging their lodge poles and wigwams, squaws with papooses on their backs, in the carts, and famished dogs, making a most interesting sight. The chief men make for the General's tent, carrying their white banner, they squat down and bring out a large calumet which they fill with killikinnick (red willow bark) and light with flint, steel and punk, regardless of the surrounding red-coats. They are more interesting than the half breeds by a long way.

After settling matters in Prince Albert, Gen. Middleton started up the North Saskatchewan on the morning of May 23rd, taking with him half of "A" Battery, Boulton's Horse and the Midland Battalion. The remainder of the force was to follow as soon as transport facilities would permit.

On May 24th the 90th Batt, left by steamer and the Grenadiers 'C' Co. Infantry, the remainder of 'A' Battery and Surveyors Corps, all under Col. Straubanzie, were obliged to go by trail. On the afternoon of the General's departure a nephew of Poundmaker came into camp at Prince Albert with a letter from that Chief containing treaty overtures. Messengers were immediately dispatched to overtake the General. Next evening the messengers returned with the General's command that Poundmaker should meet him in Battleford on the following Tuesday and make an unconditional surrender. The alternative was an armed force to drive him from his reserves and punish him.

Late in the evening of Sunday, May 24th, Gen. Middleton arrived at Battleford. On Tuesday Poundmaker, in accordance with the General's command, promptly put in an appearance, accompanied by three other chiefs. The inevitable pow-wow was immediately organized. The result was the detention in custody of Poundmaker, Lean Man, Breaking-the-Ice and Yellow Mud Blanket. The others were sent back to their reserves for the time. Having thus summarially disposed of the

Indians around Battleford, Gen. Middleton was in a position to effect one of two things - the defeat and surrender of Big Bear or his retirement into a country where starvation would speedily overtake him. It was probable that the Chief had no news of Riel's disaster so that precautions had to be taken to guard against the possibility of his getting around to the eastward with a view to forming a junction with his half-breed ally. It was presumed that he would not cross the Beaver River to the north, which ran parallel to the Saskatchewan. He would either fight or dodge. Four columns were set in motion to meet the emergency. On the extreme east Col. Irvine was to advance northward from Carlton towards Green Lake and surrounding country; from Battleford, Col. Otter was to patrol around Jackfish and Turtle Lakes; the General himself intended to take up his trail from Fort Pelly and keep him continually moving or force on the encounter; lastly, Gen. Strange was to close up the apex of the triangle between Beaver River and the Saskatchewan. He could not possibly get westward without encountering Gen. Strange and if he moved eastward in any force he would have to run

the gauntlet of both Otter and Irvine with small chance of eluding both.

### With General Strange

When General Strange's Column left Calgary for Edmonton it was formed as follows: Sixty-fifth Regiment, Montreal, 315 men, Scouts, 150 men; Col. Osborne Smith's Light Infantry, Winnipeg, 250 men, Insp. Steele with Scouts, 60 men; Mounted Police, 50 men, Alberta Rifles, 30 men; making a total of 875 men.

The first division of the column, consisting of the right wing of the Sixty-fifth, under Col. Hughes, part of Mounted Police, some Scouts under Major Steele, set out from Calgary for Edmonton on Monday, April 20, 1885, under the command of Gen. Strange.

The left wing of the Sixty-fifth followed on the 24rd, taking with them a nine pounder field gun, and on the 28th Col. Smith's Light Infantry brought up the rear. Nothing of importance occurred to interrupt the advance of the troops, although the country showed signs of having been pillaged by the Indians. The trail was good, but the snow, which had not all disappeared at the outset, caused snow blindness

among some of the men. The advance guard reached Edmonton about May 1st and were warmly received by the inhabitants, who were in anxious suspense in the absence of definite news about the conditions of the other threatened positions. Almost immediately a strong force was sent to Victoria, eighty miles down the Saskatchewan.

Col. Osborne Smith, accompanying the remainder of the column, arrived on the 9th of May, having made the whole distance from Calgary, 208 miles, in about ten days. Taking a portion of the Light Infantry, he joined the advance force at Victoria. From this point a start was made for Fort Pitt, the Mounted Police and Scouts scouring the country on each side of the river, and most efficient service was rendered by Capt. Steele, who was perfectly familiar with the country and an excellent commander. A couple of heavy guns were taken down in the scows in charge of a detachment of the police.

Scouts found that Fort Pitt was deserted by the Indians and what remained of it after the police, under Dickens, left for Battleford, having turned a few days before. The ground in the vicinity was covered with flour and other pro-

visions, showing that the Indians had destroyed what they could not eat or carry off with them.

Up to this time nothing could be heard of the McLean prisoners and Big Bear was traced to the north, where he had killed all the cattle captured from the settlers, and was making dried meat of the flesh after the old buffalo style.

Arriving at Fort Pitt, General Strange lost no time in preparing for an attack on Big Bear and rescuing his prisoners. The Scouts had been indefatigable in their search for information of the rebel chief and at length came upon him about fifteen miles from the fort.

On the evening of the 20th, our Scouts, who had been out reconnoitering, brought word that the Indians were entrenched in a strong position, about 15 miles from our camp. Next morning we disburdened our teams of all unnecessary baggage, such as tents, knapsacks and other camp equipment, leaving them in the two surviving buildings of the Fort Pitt fire, guarded by two companies of the Sixty-fourth. Putting the men on wagons, we began our pursuit of the rebels with renewed vigor. After a three hours' ride we came in plain sight of

their position, which was on a steep hill, 200 feet high, crowned with a thicket of timber. The men were immediately called into ranks and the Light Infantry and Mounted Police arranged in skirmishing order. The command to advance was then given and a booming shot from the cannon impressed upon us the fact that the engagement had already begun. With all the coolness of old veterans, the skirmishers commenced their difficult advance, and after half an hour's scramble gained the summit and charged the rebel position, which they readily conceded and retired. A few volleys were exchanged during the retreat. The Indians assumed a most defiant air, riding their horses rapidly around in a circle, waving their guns in the air and shouting. A few braves armed with Winchesters came out of ambush and laid down on one of the slippery crags, with the evident intention of picking off our men as fast as they came up. After scouring the bush for several hours our skirmishers were called in, all feeling that they had done a good day's work on one meal. Our wagons were corralled for the night. The troops slept by their arms all night.

This morning we got out at

five o'clock, and after making the best of a poor repast our train was again got under motion. We had not gone far before our scouts sighted the rebels, who were entrenched on the east side of the Little Red Deer creek. Our column was at once put in battle array and we advanced in skirmishing order. The Light Infantry and 65th formed the main body, the Mounted Rifles on the right wing, and the Mounted Police the left, with a portion of the Light Infantry in reserve.

A shot from the cannon again opened the battle, the rebels replying with a shower of bullets, which sounded like a flock of snow birds as they flew over our head. In less than a minute we were into a fierce engagement, the musketry keeping up an unintermitted rattle, while the thunder of the big gun echoed and re-echoed among the big bluffs. Before we had gone far it became evident the victory could not be achieved unless better ground could be secured, and Major Steele and a few of his gallant followers were ordered to make a dash around the enemy and shadow their position. Our troops lay three hours under fire, not being able to gain a foot. Occa-

sionally one of the rebels rifle pits would be silenced, but the firing would break out at a new and unexpected point. Our men, however, kept their ranks and maintained most excellent discipline throughout.

A charge was being talked about when Major Steele, returning, informed General Strange that the rebel line was extended three miles up the creek and that they were then manoeuvring to surround us. The retreat was then sounded and the men reluctantly withdrew from a half finished job and marched into shelter. The wounded were, Ephraim Lemay, private, shot in the lungs; Joseph Marcotte, shot in the shoulder, both of the 65th, and Private McRae of the Mounted Police.

The Winnipeg Light Infantry suffered no loss although they were in the thick of the fight, but several of us had narrow escapes. Sergeant McKay had his cap neatly pierced and shot from his head. A gunner, who was lying with his face on the ground, had a bullet pass under his chin, covering his face with dirt.

After retiring a safe distance, we halted for dinner, after addresses were made to the troops by General Strange and Colonel

Osborne Smith. The General had seen a great many fresh troops undergo their first "baptism of fire," but never in his military experience did he see a bolder attack made upon a strong position than he had that day. His orders, he said, had been promptly executed in every particular and the men showed all the valour and coolness of old troops. The enemy's position, he said, was simply impregnable. The General retired two or three miles for the night, hoping that Big Bear would remain in the position he had chosen. A messenger was at the same time dispatched to Colonel Otter asking for aid. Now at last it was hoped that a final blow could be struck at the crafty Indian Chief. By another attack in front, while the reinforcements expected from Battleford fell upon the flank or rear, it was expected that the campaign would have a fitting end. But Big Bear was in no mood to stay. Two days after the fight he bolted with every evidence of haste, leaving behind large quantities of provisions and furs. Major Steele, with his scouts, was immediately sent to follow up his trail. Steel had in all about 70 men. He found that the band had broken up to

some extent but the greater part remained with Big Bear. He followed the larger trail and came up with enemy on the morning of June 2nd about fifty miles north east of Pitt. The engagement that ensued is ably described by the dashing commander himself in his official report.

The following is an extract from report of Major J. B. Steele:

While at dinner we were alarmed by two shots fired by Mackay (Rev Canon Mackay) at some Indian scouts who unfortunately escaped. Mackay had gone in advance of Sergeant Butlin's party without my knowledge.

These Indians waited in ambush and shot Fisk, of the advance party, breaking his arm. The main body was extended at once and rushed through the bush, but no Indians were seen. We advanced without further mishap to night camp, 45 miles north east on Big Bear's trails. Fisk rode on pluckily without a murmur. The trail showed a large party in front, one day old. We found a second note from McLean, saying: 'All's well, May 28th,' and signs left by him on the trail. We marched at daylight, and the advanced party under Sergeant Butlin arrived at

a hill commanding the Indian camp of the previous night. Two tepees were standing unoccupied, and there were a few head of horses and oxen. The remainder were moving towards and crossing a ford leading to an island or point about twelve hundred yards in advance. At the previous camp we had counted 73 fires, therefore, knowing that they were too strong in numbers, it was my intention to parley through Mackay, if discovered. Their picket, however, hid within a few yards of the advance party, discovered them and fired the alarm. Seeing them retiring to an apparently impregnable position on the island, I put the horses in cover and extended on the brow of the hill to punish a few of them. Their chief called to his men to go at us, as there only six of us. They commenced crawling up the hill under cover of the bush using it, the leader getting within ten feet of the teamster, Fielders, who volunteered to join us. Fielders killed him, and puffs of smoke immediately appeared from clumps of bush all through the bottom and the hill surrounding their camp. My scouts killed two more running from us, and then fired a volley into the tepees

and the Indians taking cover, killing one from the tepees. The line then rushed to the bottom, under a strong fire, and then divided. The left charged the hill, commanding the position, and turned their position, bringing more fire on them; the right took the swamp along the lake. Squadron Sergeant Major Fury was with the left and was shot through the breast by the man with Sharpe's rifle, going up the hill. The scouts were on the brow in a few minutes. The Indians retired as our men advanced on the run who, lying down and firing a volley when the Indians attempted to make a stand, had cleared the whole ridge half an hour after firing had commenced. The right cleared the swamp, killing five and losing none. The left shot seven retiring through the bush to the ford, about 600 yards from the hill, and wounded one (the last seen attempting to cross). The right then retired to protect our horses and flank and I had a white flag hoisted to parley. Canon Mackay told them to give up the prisoners. The answer was a volley from the island. A second attempt was made with no better results, this time asking them to allow McLean to speak with us. We then continued to

exchange shots till a buckboard was fitted to carry Sergt. Fury. The left had one more wounded in Scout West of Edmonton, shot in the leg, a ball entering at the knee cap and remaining in the thigh. He rode his horse, however.

We destroyed the ammunition found in the teepees and burned them with their contents. Mackay collected four horses and two colts, which we brought with us. I kept a fire on the island until the wounded were well retired and then retired 12 miles. Fury shows wonderful pluck and determination, and after halting two hours we moved on 12 miles further to the first feeding ground for the horses, camping for the night at 11:30 p.m. The horses were terribly played out, having travelled 80 miles on very little feed from the morning of the previous day, over a worse trail for muskies and brush than that between Vermillion Creek and Sucker Creek. I moved on at 3 a.m. again, meeting an ambulance from General Middleton's column at 8 a.m., ten miles from your camp at Stand-off Valley (where Big Bear stood off General Strange). I had sent on the the previous night, MacKay and Gasborne, with Sergeant Butlin

and Fielders into camp to report, and for an ambulance for the wounded. They arrived and reported to General Middleton at 12 30 p.m.

We camped at this place, sending the wounded to Fort Pitt, Fury still keeping up well. The doctor reported his recovery safe unless internal bleeding commenced, and dressed Fisk's arm, one bone being shattered. The bullet was easily extracted from West's leg. On my arrival in this camp I received orders to send my sick horses and men to Fort Pitt, and with the remainder, to join General Middleton's command and follow Big Bear. Fourteen were retired unable to go on, and I remained in camp with the remainder of the scouts and Hatton's command. The orders are to march to-morrow. I did not receive your dispatch until two hours ago, the courier's excuse being that it was lost in the lining of his coat. The non-commissioned officers and men behaved with great steadiness in the fight of the 3rd. Captain Oswald and Lieut. Coryell set the men an excellent example, and Canon MacKay risked his life to a considerable extent. I thank you for your kindness in



sending ambulances, tents and rations.

"J. B. STEELE,

"Major Commanding Cavalry,  
"Alberta Field Force".

On the day previous to this fight, Mrs. Delaney and Mrs. Gowanlock, captives since the Frog Lake massacre, succeeded in making their escape. The half-breeds who had been so zealously protecting these ladies from the Indians during the long dreadful two months of their captivity, had formed a little caravan of their own and when the camp moved they moved with it in a body. On the Monday morning in question, the Indian camp moved slightly in advance of the half breed party in charge of the prisoners. This was the first time such a lack of watchfulness had been exhibited by the Indians, and taking advantage of their position the half breeds dropped further behind and finally turned off the trail and drove their ox and pony teams as rapidly as possible in the direction of Turtle Lake.

They intended making a wide detour, and come around again to Fort Pitt where they knew they would be safe. A party of a dozen of our scouts, however, got on their trail. Thinking

they were a band of Indians escaping from the general camp, they dashed suddenly into their midst and without further ado ordered them to put down their arms. It only needed a minute to show the real state of affairs. Both parties were surprised, the scouts on account of their unlooked for discovery, the half-breeds that friends should dash in upon them with such fury. Among the scouts was Wm. McKay, Hudson's Bay Factor at Battleford, who was well acquainted with both ladies. Their meeting under such circumstances may be better imagined than described. A scene so effecting as it was is better left to the imagination. No delay was made in heading the caravan in the direction of Fort Pitt and they all arrived there on the morning of June 5th. We have seen that Major Steele in his report makes mention of Gen. Middleton. We had left him at Battletoche. To him we must now return and trace his advance up to his junction with Gen. Strange.

The day following the victory was occupied in receiving the submission of the half-breeds. White flags were seen everywhere. The rank and file of the rebels were disarmed and allowed to depart. The ringleaders and those sus-

pected of having been implicated in the massacre were held and sent to Regina. While the priests were engaged in burying the rebels killed in the fight, the troops performed the last sad rites over their lost comrades in arms. Among them, Capt. Brown, of Boulton's Scouts, was laid in a soldier's grave in sight of the majestic Saskatchewan. With tender hands and kind words of encouragement the wounded were placed on board the steamer and sent to comfortable quarters in the hospital at Saskatoon. The rebel wounded were sent to the same place. The village presented a pitiful sight. About 200 women and children were huddled together under carts and in tents, among the ruins of what were a short time before comfortable and happy homes. Four days had destroyed the result of years of patient labor and toil. Some of them saw with added grief their husbands carried off to answer for crimes they had been led into by a foolish, yet blind confidence in their leaders. Riel, the arch rebel, was still at large, but the scouts were fast closing on his footsteps. Meanwhile the troops were preparing for a further advance through the seat of the rebellion.

### General Middleton Arrives

General Strange was already in a position to cover his ground on short notice. A steamer had been sent up the river to carry him supplies from Battleford. On Saturday, May 30th, it returned with news of his fight with Big Bear. Now was the time to act. Within two hours General Middleton had selected his force and arranged for an advance by way of Fort Pitt. He selected his own brigade—the heroes of Batoche—with the addition of Herchmer's Mounted Police and half of "B" Battery. Sunday morning a start was made on the steamers North west, Alberts and Marquis, which were barricaded with cordwood. On Monday they picked up couriers from General Strange and later on sixteen men in charge of a scow from Strange's force. In the afternoon the force reached the landing at which they were to disembark, a few miles below Fort Pitt. While there six prisoners, who had been held by Big Bear, were brought in by some Mounted Police. General Strange had moved forward to renew the attack on the Indians, only to find them gone.

General Middleton decided to pursue them with all possible

speed and to this end sent out a force composed of mounted men only, the infantry being ordered up to Fort Pitt.

While these arrangements were being made a force of Mounted Police arrived with further despatches from General Strange, also the cheering intelligence that, although the McLeans, Delaney, Gowanlock and other prisoners were still with Big Bear, they had been treated well by the Indian Chief. A letter had been found by Strange on the scene of Thursday's engagement, written by Mr. McLean, stating that they were all well and that no cruelties had been perpetrated or indignities offered them. On the way in the Mounted Police heard cries of help proceeding from a poplar bluff which they were passing. They shouted to the parties to come out of the bush. They did so, and were discovered to be Mr. and Mrs. Quinney, the Orion Lake missionaries, Edward Dufresne, Francis Dufresne and wife, and William Cameron. All these had been held as prisoners by Big Bear. They escaped on the day of the fight.

The country through which the mounted force was to march was very rough and the available

maps gave very little information in regard to it, as the greater part of it was unsurveyed.

The following account by Assistant Surgeon Haultain, of the Mounted Infantry, will be interesting:

I might tell you something about the routine of the Mounted Infantry when going after Big Bear. The orders would invariably be Reveille at 4 a.m., start at 5.30. After getting up and giving the horses oats, we would have breakfast of tea, hard tack and corned beef (or bacon fried when the wagons were with us), strap up our waterproof and blankets behind the saddle, and oats and hard tack and tinned beef in front. After the command, 'Saddle up', from the captains to their different corps (viz., Mounted Police, Survey Corps, Boulton's Troops, French's Scouts, and Steele's Scouts), would come 'attention', to line up two deep, then 'prepare to mount' and 'mount', and then we were off for seven hours without a halt. If the trail was good, mostly walking, with a canter now and then. When halt was made there would be a 'brush gang' ahead with axes to clear the road and lay the marshes with brush for the Gathing (which came everywhere) to cross.

## Surg. Haultain's Story

Sometimes the trail would be through open pine woods, but mostly through small poplar, sometimes so hilly that we would have to dismount to go up and down and every here and there would be lakes of all sizes, but very few duck or game of any kind were seen on the way to Loon Lake. The ground bore evidences of the time when beaver were plentiful in the shape of regular banks six or eight feet high damming up creeks.

About 12 o'clock the advance party would begin to look out for a halting place near grass and water for the horses, then at the welcome order, 'dismount', saddles and bridles would be off in an instant and the horses either let loose in some swampy place where the feed was good, or tied here and there with long tether ropes, but often, instead of feeding, they would crowd in a long line to leeward of the fires and stand quietly in the smoke to escape the flies (black flies, sand flies, mosquitoes and bull-dogs). Then would come our own dinner (same as breakfast) and an enjoyable smoke lying supine in the shade. After an hour and a half we would be off again till a little before sunset. Some of our

camping places were most park-like, large spreading firs with dry silvery moss for the ground and generally a large slough, or whatever it is, or two close by.

After tea (vide dinner) we would heap up large fires for night and lay spruce boughs around. The saddles and oats made fine pillows and with a blanket and waterproof over us, we were ready for dew or rain — all sleeping with feet towards the fires. The horses would be brought in and tethered close around for nights after having their oats. And then the officer for the day would mount the pcket.

Some days there would be nothing to vary the monotony, except looking over the Indian camping grounds, which were eight or ten miles apart usually. Other days an Indian scout or two could be seen, or their tracks, and we would advance slowly and cautiously, momentarily expected an ambush, but it later turned out their main thought was escape. Some of their camps had rifle-pits dug, showing that they expected us to overtake them, but this we never did, though we travelled two or three times their day's march, because of one or two long halts the General

made, when we stayed in camp for a day or two to make 'travols' which were never used after all. These are two long poles, lashed about three feet apart at one end, which trails on the ground with the baggage on it, while the other ends are strapped on pads on each side of the horse's back. The Indians make their dogs carry their lodge poles and tent coverings in this way. The ponies are worth mentioning. They are, as a rule, most sociable to one another. There are the 'cayuse' ponies from Montana and the Western States, and the 'Shaggynappies' or Indian ponies. They are not shod. When thirsty they drink their fill at one draught and start off again. If loose around camp they come in naturally for their oats. They will stand at times huddled together with their noses in the smoke of the smudge to escape the flies. They are very tough, as they frequently come down on their heads or fall and get stuck amongst the dead roots in the swamps, but rarely get injured. Along the trail between Fort Pitt and Beaver River the ducks are plentiful, and now and again one would fly off the grass near a slough, when two or three fellows would dart out of the line

in a race for the eggs which would be sure to be there. The men are not supposed to fall out of the troop, but nothing is said against a dozen or so getting behind the shelter of some bush for a 'pipe parade' so as to make one valuable match go the rounds of pipes, or falling out to watch a thirsty horse.

As assistant surgeon, I had the privilege of riding where I liked, but in woody country it was dangerous to leave the trail any distance for fear of being mistaken for a sneaking Indian. When in camp for any length of time quarts, with horse shoes, was a favorite game. When at Prince Albert I got some acid citric and pot bicarb. It used to be greatly appreciated during our halts. Sometimes I would have our tent full of surveyors, old chaps, some, each armed with a tin cup and spoon, tramping a quarter of a mile to a spring to have a drink 'with bead on it.'

In this advance the General was continually on the trail of the hostile chief, but unable to force on an encounter. In their hurry the Indians scattered everything, except provisions, along the trail.

On June 9th the mounted force arrived at a point about 70 miles

northeast of Fort Pitt, where they found an immense muskeg, which the General considered impassable by the body of his force. Scouts came in with accounts of Big Bear, who had crossed the muskeg, and was moving northwest, presumably to a large cache of provisions which he had stored at Beaver River.

The evident plan in the emergency was to thoroughly ensure the strength of General Strange's position in that direction, for once out of the western end of the triangle their game was lost beyond recovery.

The General returned at once to Fort Pitt, arriving on the 13th of June. General Strange had advanced towards the Chippewagan Mission on the Beaver River, via Frog Lake, and arrived there on June 9th. There, as so, further advance was practically impossible, owing to the nature of the country. On their way out, the cache of provisions mentioned before was found and carried off.

Colonel Williams in command of the Infantry, which General Middleton had dispensed with, went to Fort Pitt, remained there a week, and then moved up to Frog Lake, to form a junction with General Strange. General

Strange, as we have seen, had advanced from that point to Beaver River.

General Middleton left Fort Pitt immediately, and reached Beaver River about 10th of June. There scouts brought a Wood Cree Indian with the welcome news that the Wood Cree had parted company with Big Bear, taking the white prisoners with them, and that they were then on their way to Fort Pitt to surrender them. Big Bear had gone eastward.

Fort Pitt, June 22.

This morning at 5 o'clock Mr. Bedson returned with the 24 people who had been held by Big Bear as prisoners, and after whom the whole of General Middleton's force of upwards of 2,000 have been hunting in detachments for the past three weeks. Their arrival was expected this morning, and the event, therefore, was not of the sensational nature it otherwise would have been. Much desire, however, was shown to look upon and converse with those who had undergone so rough an experience, and whose names for the past months had been constantly on our lips. They were all taken aboard the steamer *Marquis*, and after an excellent breakfast, most

of them sought slumber, for they had ridden in through the whole night and were greatly fatigued. When they arrived they were all decently dressed, mainly in the clothes Mr. Bedson had taken out for them.

The names of the 24 are the following:

W. J. McLean, Hudson Bay factor at Fort Pitt, wife and nine children (four girls and five boys), Mr. Mana, Indian Instructor at Long Lake, wife and three children, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Indian Instructor at Long Lake, J. K. and Stanley F. Simpson, Hudson's Bay clerks at Fort Pitt; Mr. Perrie, a French-Canadian, and a friendly half breed, his wife and three of a family.

### Getting Ready for Home

Now that the prisoners were rescued, the campaign lost interest and a general longing for home took possession of the men. The General returned at once to Fort Pitt, arriving there on the 19th of June. He determined to give up the chase after Big Bear, placed garrisons at the main points and leave starvation to work the rest. By the defection of the Wood Crees he was no longer formidable and the Mounted Police might be trusted to hunt him down at leisure. His course, when

last seen appeared to be in an easterly direction, so that hopes were entertained that Colonel Otter might be fortunate enough to have a parting brush with him. Col. Otter had left Battleford on June 9th and, after continued marching through heavy country, had reached Turtle River on June 13th. The next day he took part of his force and marched to Turtle Lake, about five miles off. Returning he visited Stoney Lake and thence started for Pelican Lake, sixty miles off; but on arriving at Birch Lake the column found it impossible to go further. A halt was decided until further orders arrived. Meanwhile, the scouts were kept busy scouring the country in all directions for Big Bear.

Some of them were lucky enough to capture four of his tribe, but they always returned without the big chief. The captured Indians however conducted the scouts to the place Big Bear camped when they left him, but on reaching the place it was found that Big Bear had moved away and from the tracks near by it was presumed to the south.

On several occasions unmistakable traces of the Indians had been seen. Indeed all through this expedition it was surprising

how vigilant the chief scouts must have been. On June 21st orders came that the column was to return. The march was resumed and Col. Otter reached Battleford about June 30th, having been out about twenty-three days and travelled about 180 miles. The men were ordered to prepare for home at once. Col. Otter took this opportunity to address his men. His speech is a good summary of the feelings of the brigade during the whole campaign both as to the duties assigned to it and as to the spirit in which they were performed.

He said that he might not have the opportunity again of addressing the men and had taken advantage of the occasion to do so. He was aware of the feeling of dissatisfaction prevailing amongst the men that the brigade had not played a more important part in the campaign. They had unfortunately not been able to share in the victories that had fallen to the General in command. "At the outset it was intended that this brigade should be attached to that of the Major-General, but at Qu'Appelle new orders were received and our duty was to relieve Battleford. You have done your duty in this respect", he said. At Battleford your duties were onerous,

the fatigues and duties were numerous and trying upon your energies and I am pleased to say that not a single complaint has come to my ears showing any grumbling on the part of the soldiers or any unwillingness to perform the duties assigned to you. Our marches have been wearisome but they have been so well performed as to gain the admiration of everyone. Although it has been our misfortune not to have shared in the glories of the campaign, as have befallen other brigades, that the duties which were assigned to you have been willingly and well performed is beyond question, which is all that can be expected of a soldier.

General Strange's column arrived at Fort Pitt on June 27. The troops were reviewed by the General and a start made for Battleford by steamers. Here the Queen's Own and the rest of Otter's command, except A Battery and a galling which remained with him as a garrison, joined the homeward bound troops.

#### Arrival at Winnipeg

While thoughts were thus bent on home, new joy was added to the occasion by the news of the capture of Big Bear by Colonel Irvine's command.

He was taken to Prince Albert,



where General Middleton had an interview with him on his arrival with the troops. A Globe correspondent thus describes the capture and subsequent interview.

The capture of Big Bear and the counsellors who shared the personal fortunes of the flying monarch was a very tame affair. Sergt Smart and eleven Mounted Policemen, who were on duty at Fort Carlton ferry, were informed by Mr. Garson, who had been in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's store at Carlton before the destruction, and for several weeks had been camped on the north side of the river that Big Bear had come to his (Garson's) camp and was then on an island near by. Sergeant Smart and his men easily effected a passage thither, and the chief with eleven of his men was disarmed and made prisoners. They did not offer the slightest resistance and were badly frightened. Big Bear, who is a 60-year old coward, was especially funky, and hurriedly disavowed his participation in the Frog Lake massacre, saying the whites there were killed against his wishes by young men whom he could not control. Without much delay Smart took his pris-

oners to Prince Albert, where Superintendent Gagnon of the Mounted Police, had been left in charge by Colonel Irvine. To Gagnon, Big Bear said he was making for the United States and was desirous of getting there that he might make peace without being pursued by troops. The correspondents found the old man prisoner in the log prison near the Hudson's Bay store, his son (eight years old) and one of his counsellors, Ka pen-pa-tow, being his only companion in durance.

There are thirteen other counsellors prisoners elsewhere, this inflated number being the aggregate of Gagnon's, Smart's, Crozier's and Jerome's captures. The Bear is a black Indian, with an enormous head, his face being as long as a flour barrel, and about as expressive. He was dressed in a dirty blanket, dirtier leggings, clean iron shackles and polished steel handcuffs. His glances were furtive, his mien humble to servility and the picture he presented as far as possible removed from that of his fellow chief, Poundmaker, when in similar circumstances.

With William McKay, of Battleford, as interpreter, General Middleton had an interview with

the prisoner. Middleton appears to much advantage in talks of this sort. He doesn't shake hands with the criminal nor encourage him to deliver a meaningless rhodomontade. He asked him his name and why he had stayed on the warpath so long. To this Big Bear replied that he did not know that the whites wanted to make peace. Asked why he had kept the McLeans and other prisoners so long, Big Bear replied that they were not prisoners, but had joined his people of their own freewill and he had saved their lives.

Big Bear will be sent to Regina

for trial and the capital of the north-west territory promises to become a very Dublin in its judicial importance criminal jurisprudence entirely. Colonel Irvine and his command had returned from Green Lake when he got to Prince Albert and reported a mean trip through the swamps and captures of but a few reds.

It was decided that the troops should not retrace their steps by Batoche, Clarke's Crossing and Swift Current, but descend the river to Lake Winnipeg, thence down the lake to Selkirk and on to Winnipeg by rail.

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## RIEL'S TRIAL AND DEATH

BY GEORGE BARTLEY

The drama of the Riel Rebellion was fully played in 1885 and ended with a fitting epilogue, namely, the trial and conviction of its chief instigator and fool hardy leader. With the termination of legal proceedings there was the usual war of words over the merits and demerits of the now famous and historical case. There was a copious crop of nicely drawn distinctions between "patriots fighting for their rights and rebels guilty of the blackest crimes". Though the defence of

Louis Riel, the arch conspirator, took skilful advantage of every point in his favor, yet justice fated him to what must be considered a tragic ending. He was sentenced to death on September 18, 1885. In the meantime, pending appeal, he was granted a reprieve and executed at Regina on November 16. At the time, the verdict and sentence provoked much newspaper controversy, and called forth heated arguments between the two chief racial sections of the Dominion.

Both sections admitted the

rebel's guilt, though one side justified and the other condemned him. One side maintained he had been awarded a righteous fate for an act of high treason, while the other lamented his ill success and pardoned the resort to arms. "The East applied to him the honored term of patriot, the West affixed on him the stigma of murderer and traitor"

The causes which led to the North West Rebellion, and logically held, did not warrant the half-breeds in throwing over constitutional means in seeking redress of their grievances—still less did they justify an appeal to arms. In fact, the grievances were more imaginary than real and sometimes illusion sinks deeper in the human mind than reality. The acts of the Government Half-breed Commission and the largess it distributed seemed an admission of claims not sentimental but legal. Nevertheless, the claims were, in great measure, sentimental.

The half-breed assumptions of proprietorship in the land were wild and extravagant; compared with the juster rights of the Indians, they were foolish and wicked. Their claims to ownership of the soil, however, were not really those of the modest

and reasonable half-breeds. They were those of Louis Riel, their ambitious and madcap leader, in whose mind they were first conceived in 1869, when his brain was turned by his elevation to the rebel presidency. It was made quite clear that the preposterous claims were not lost in magnitude or gained in lucidity from 1869 down to the time of the second Riel Rebellion in 1885. Again, it has been pointed out, from Riel's proposed partitioning of the territories among the various tribes and religious sects, with which he had wished to people his kingdom, was logical proof of the man's insanity. The scheme was curiously mixed up with religious and patriotic fervor and with not a little of this world's cunning.

Capt. G. M. Adam in his history of the Canadian North West (1885) says:

Apart from the question of insanity which we think the jury of Riel's trial had little opportunity of fully weighing, there is no doubt that Riel was given a fair and impartial trial. Had the constitution of the North West permitted it, the miscreant merited the sharp and salutary discipline of a drumhead court-martial. In some respects it is a pity that the

expeditious machinery of military law was not instantly invoked. It would have consigned its victim, without circumlocution, to a well-deserved fate, and relieved the country of a disturbing political and sectional discussion. But perhaps it is well that the course which has been taken has been followed. With all the provocation that has been given and all the loss that has been entailed, it is seemly that the nation should restrain its righteous passion, and punish crime with due deliberation, and without the suspicion of being vindictive. Receiving a fair trial and being condemned to pay the penalty of his crimes by forfeiting his life, why should the sentence be interfered with? Let the law take its course. In a previous rebellion Riel received the clemency of the country when that clemency was ill-deserved. For his further crime he should now most assuredly suffer, unless political offences of the gravest character are to be robbed of their heinousness and condoned at the promptings of a mistaken sentiment. The leniency of the nation has once, in his case, been foolishly abused; to extend leniency again is to make a travesty of justice, and to court further disaster. A writer in the *Toronto Week* put

it: "The word treason should be blotted out of the statute book if Riel does not pay the penalty of his offence."

In Riel's case the verdict was guilty of murder with a recommendation to mercy, but upon what grounds for mercy was not stated. The verdict shows that the jury considered him to be in possession of his faculties or, as it has been stated "of sufficient faculties to know that he was incurring a terrible responsibility when he led his dupes to take up arms against their country"

The jurisdiction of the court at Regina was questioned. Its competence to try a man with a jury of six instead of twelve men was made the main issue. With the demurrer to the trial and sentence to death of the prisoners by a stipendiary magistrate and without the preliminary investigation by a grand jury or by a coroner, was made an appeal to the full Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba, comprising His Honor Chief Justice Wallbridge, Mr. Justice Taylor and Mr. Justice Kilam. Sentence of Riel was confirmed September 9

Riel and his fellow conspirators were arraigned at Regina on July 6, 1885. The former on a charge of treason, under the statute of

Edward III, the latter on a charge of complicity in rebellion, under the law as treason-felony. The trials were heard before His Honor Hugh Richardson, Stipendiary Magistrate of the North West Territories, exercising criminal jurisdiction under provisions of the North West Territories Act of 1880. Associated with Colonel Richardson on the bench was Mr. Henry Lejeune. Associated with Mr. Christopher Robinson, Q. C., as Crown Counsel, were Messrs. B. B. Osler, Q. C., Toronto, Burbridge, Ottawa; Casgrain, Quebec, and Scott, Regina. Counsel retained for the defence of Riel were Messrs. C. Fitzpatrick and F. X. Lemieux, Quebec, and J. N. Greenshields, Montreal.

On July 20th the court met at Regina and adjourned to the 28th instant, when the following jurymen were selected: Messrs. H. J. Painter, E. Everett, B. J. Brooks, J. W. Merryfield, H. Dean and F. Cosgrave, foreman. On August 1st (third day of the trial) at 3:15 p. m. the jury returned its verdict of "Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy". Judge Richardson sentenced Riel to be hanged at Regina on September 18, 1885.

The counts in the indictment (July 6, 1885) charged Louis Riel as being a British subject or as a

resident enjoying Her Majesty's protection in the North West Territories, with having levied war against Her Majesty the Queen (1) at Duck Lake, (2) at Fish Creek and (3) at Batoche. The trial took place at Regina, North West Territories, July 28 to Aug. 1, 1885.

At the outset, writes W. A. H., correspondent of the Montreal Star, Riel spoke in a quiet and low tone, many of his statements carrying home conviction to his hearers. "At any rate," was the subsequent comment, "Riel spoke with the belief that he is right."

Gradually, as he proceeded and got fairly launched into his subject, his eyes sparkled, his body swayed to and fro as if strongly agitated and his hands accomplished a series of wonderful gestures as he warmed up and spoke with impassioned eloquence. His hearers were spellbound, and well they might be, as each concluding assertion was uttered with the effect and force of a trumpet blast. That every soul in court was impressed as not untrue and many ladies were moved to tears. The following is an epitome of what he said.

Your honor and gentlemen of the jury: It would be an easy mat-

ter for me to-day to play the role of a lunatic, because the circumstances are such as to excite any ordinary man subject to natural excitement after what has transpired today. The natural excitement, or may I add anxiety, which my trial causes me, is enough to justify me in acting in the manner of a demented man; but I hope, with the help of God, that I will maintain a calm exterior and act with the decorum that suits this honorable court. You have, no doubt, seen by the papers produced by the Crown that I was not a man disposed to think of God at the beginning. Gentlemen, I don't want to play the part of a lunatic.

Oh, my God, help me through the grace and divine influence of Jesus. Oh, my God, bless me, bless this court, bless this jury and bless my good lawyers, who at great sacrifice have come 700 leagues to defend me. Bless the lawyers for the Crown, for they have done what they considered their duty. God grant that fairness be shown. Oh, Jesus, change the curiosity of the ladies and others here to sanctity. The day of my birth I was helpless and my mother was helpless. Somebody helped her. I lived and although a man I am as helpless

today as I was a babe on my mother's breast. But the North West is also my mother, although the North West is sick and confined, there is someone to take care of her. I am sure that mother will not kill me after forty years of life. My mother cannot take my life; she will be indulgent and will forget.

When I came here from Montana in July, 1884, I found the Indians starving. The state of affairs was terrible. The half breeds were subsisting on the rotten pork of the Hudson's Bay Company. This was the condition, this was the pride of responsible government. What did Louis Riel do? I did not equally forget the whites. I directed my attention to assist all classes, irrespective of creed, color or nationality.

We have made petitions to the Canadian government, asking them to relieve the state of affairs. We took time. Those who know me, know we took time with the object of uniting all classes, even, if I may speak, all parties. Those who know me know I have suffered. I tried to come to an understanding with the authorities on different points. I believe I have done my duty. It was said that I was egotistical. A man cannot

generalize himself unless he is imputed with the taint. After the Canadian government, through the honorable under-secretary of state, replied to my letter regarding the half-breeds, then, and not till then, did I look after my private affairs.

A good deal can be said of the distribution of land. I do not know if my dignity would permit me to mention what you term my foreign policy, but if I were allowed to explain or question certain witnesses, those things would have looked different. My lawyers are good, but they do not understand the circumstances. Be it understood that I appreciate their services. Were I to go into the details, I could safely say what Capt. Young has told you regarding my mission, to bring about practical results. I have writings; my career is perhaps nearly run, but after dissolution my spirit will still bring about practical results. Striking his breast, he added:

No one need say that the Northwest is not suffering. The Saskatchewan was especially afflicted, but what have I done to bring about practical results? For ten years I have been aware that I had a mission to perform. God is with me. He is in this dock and

God is with my lawyers, the same as He was with me in the battles of Saskatchewan. I have not assumed my mission. In Manitoba today I have a mission to perform. Today I am forgotten by the Manitobans as dead. Did I not obtain for that province a constitutional government notwithstanding the opposition of the Ottawa authorities? That was the cause of my banishment. After going into some further details, he continued:

I thank the glorious General Middleton for his testimony that I possess my mental faculties. I felt that God was blessing me when those words were pronounced. I was in Beaufort asylum; Dr. Roy over there knows it, but I thank the Crown for destroying his testimony. I was also in the Lunatic asylum at Longue Pointe near Montreal, and would like to see my old friends, Dr. Howard and Dr. Lachapelle, who treated me so charitably. Even if I am to die, I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I will not be regarded by all men as an insane person.

To the Court: Your honor and gentlemen of the jury, my reputation, my life, my liberty, are in your hands and are at your discretion. I am so confident in your

high sense of duty that I have no anxiety as to the verdict. My calmness does not arise from the presumption that you will acquit me. Although you are only half a jury (being six in number), only a shred of that proud old British constitution, I respect you. I can only trust, judge and gentlemen, that good and practical results will arise from your judgment conscientiously rendered. I would call your attention to one or two points. The first is that the House of Commons, Senate and Ministry, which make the laws, do not respect the interests of the Northwest. My second point is that the Northwest Council has the defect of its parent. There are practically no elections and it is a sham legislature. Then, as if wandering from his subject, Riel broke forth and said: -

I was at Batoche; I fired and wounded your soldiers. Bear in mind, is my crime, committed in self-defence, so enormous? Oh, Jesus Christ help me, for they are trying to tear me into pieces. Jurors, if you support the plea of insanity, otherwise acquit me all the same. Console yourselves with the reflection that you will be doing justice to one who has suffered for fifteen years, to my family and to the Northwest.

Riel concluded as follows, his language containing a strange admixture of the words applied to him by the medical experts, which he ingeniously turned against the government.

Your honors and gentlemen of the jury. I am taking the circumstances of my trial as they are. The only thing to which I would respectfully call your attention before you retire to deliberate is the irresponsibility of the government. It is a fact that the government possesses an absolute lack of responsibility, an insanity complicated with analysis. A monster of irresponsible, insane government, and its little Northwest Council, had made up their minds to answer my petitions by surrounding me and by suddenly attempting to jump at me and my people in the fertile valley of the Saskatchewan. You are perfectly justified in declaring that, having my reason and sound mind, I acted reasonably and in self-defence, while the government, my aggressor, being responsible and consequently insane, cannot but have acted madly and wrong; and if high treason there is, it must be on its side, not on my part.

At the conclusion of Riel's lengthy address, Mr Christopher Robinson, Q C, closed the case



for the Crown in a powerful speech, which went far to counteract the sympathetic effect produced by Riel's oration. Mr Robinson pointed out that no evidence was produced to show that the prisoner had not committed the acts he was charged with. From the evidence it was quite clear the prisoner was neither a patriot nor a lunatic. If prisoner was not responsible for the rebellion, who was? The speaker went over the evidence and showed that Riel's acts were not those of a lunatic, but well considered in all their bearings and the deliberate acts of a particularly sound mind. The evidence as to Riel's confinement in an asylum nine years ago was not satisfactory. Why was he sent there under an assumed name? Why was the record of his case not produced along with the other papers and a statement of his condition when leaving the asylum? Medical men were not always the best judges of insanity. Taking up the evidence against the prisoner, Mr. Robinson went over it in detail and said no mercy should be shown one who had committed such acts. He pictured the terrible results if Riel had succeeded in his effort to rouse the Indians. The reason the prisoners, Poundmak-

er and Big Bear, had not been put in the witness box was that they could not be asked to give evidence that would incriminate themselves.

Mr. Justice Richardson then read over the evidence to the jury, after which the court adjourned. At 3:15 p.m. (August 1st) the jury returned a verdict of "Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy".

On August 1st, 1885, at 3:15 p.m., after exactly one hour's deliberation, the jury returned to court with its verdict in the case of Louis Riel, charged with high treason, the trial being held at Regina. The prisoner, who had been on his knees in the dock praying incessantly, rose and stood facing the six men who came in bearing for him the message of life or death.

The Clerk of the Court, amid a silence so intense that, like the darkness of Egypt, it could be felt, asked if the gentlemen of the jury had agreed upon their verdict. Mr Cosgrave, the foreman, answered in a low tone, but heard distinctly in a general hush: "We have".

The clerk then asked: "Is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" Everyone but the prisoner seemed anxious. He alone, of all those

present eager to hear the message of fate, was calm. The foreman replied: "Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy" Riel smiled as if the sentence in no way affected him and bowed gracefully to the jury.

Col Richardson, S M , asked the prisoner if he had anything to say why the sentence of the Court should not be passed upon him.

Riel replied, Yes, your honor. Then he began, in a low, calm voice, to detail the story of the half-breeds in Manitoba and spoke at length of the rebellion of 1869. He said that if he had to die for what had taken place, it would be a consolation to his wife and to his friends to know that he had not died in vain. In the years to come people will look at Manitoba and say that Riel helped the dwellers of those fertile plains to obtain the benefits they now enjoy. He said it would be an easy thing for him to make an incendiary speech but he would refrain. He said that God had given him a mission to perform and if suffering was part of that mission, he bowed respectfully to the divine will, and he was ready to accept the task, even if the end should be death. Like David of old, he had suffered, but he lack-

ed two years of the time that David had suffered.

The prisoner then went into the history of the Red River rebellion at great length. He claimed that he had ruled the country for two months for the government and his only reward was a sentence of exile. The troubles in the Saskatchewan, he said, were but a continuation of the troubles of the Red River and the breeds feel that they are being robbed by the government, which has failed to carry out the treaty promises that had been made to them. The breeds sustained their rights in '69 by arms and the people of Manitoba are enjoying the results today. The people of Saskatchewan only followed the same precedent and he trusted the same results would follow.

He then spoke at great length of the part played by Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir George Carter and Bishop Tache in the Red River rebellion. The money that had been given to him and to Lepine on leaving the country had been accepted, he said, as part of what was justly their due. The whites were gradually crowding out the Indians and the Metis and what was more natural and just than for them to take up arms in defence of their rights.

He justified his claim to \$35,000 by saying that it was offered to him to keep out of the country for three years.

The English constitution, he said, had been perfected for the happiness of the world and his wish to have the representatives of the different nations here was to give people from the countries of the old world an opportunity of enjoying the blessings God had given England. God had given England great glory, but she must work for that glory or it would surely pass away. The Roman empire was four hundred years in declining from its proud pre-eminence and England would be in a similar position; but before England faded away a grander England would be built up in this immense country. His heart, while it beat, would not abandon the idea of having a new Ireland, a new Germany, a new France here, and the people of those countries would enjoy liberties under the British constitution which they did not obtain at home.

If he must die for his principles, if the brave men who were with him must die, he hoped the French Canadians would come and help the people to get back what was being unjustly wrench-

ed from them. Peace had always been uppermost in his thoughts and it was to save the country from being deluged with blood later on that they strove for their rights now. He concluded by objecting to the jury and the decision of the Court, and asked that he be not tried for the alleged offences of this season, but that his whole career be put on trial, and the jury asked to give a decision as to whether his life and acts have in any way benefitted the country or not.

Mr C. Robinson moved for the sentence of the Court. Judge Richardson then said. "Louis Riel you are charged with treason. You let loose the flood gates of rapine and bloodshed and brought ruin and death to many families who, if let alone, were in comfort and a fair way of affluence. For what you did you have been given a fair and impartial trial. Your remarks are no excuse for your acts. You committed acts that the law demands an account for at your hands. The jury coupled with their verdict a recommendation to mercy. I can hold out no prospects for you, and I would recommend you to make your peace with God. For me only one duty and a painful one to perform remains.

It is to pass sentence upon you. If your life is spared, no one will feel more gratified than myself, but I can hold out no hope. The sentence of this Court upon you, Louis Riel, is that you be taken to the guardroom of the mounted police of Regina, whence you came, and kept there until Sept. 18, 1885, and from thence to the place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck until dead and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul"

Riel never moved a muscle, but bowing to the Court, said: "Is that on Friday, your honor?" He was then taken from the courtroom and a few minutes after was driven back under strong escort to the guardroom.

After sentence had been passed upon Riel, Mr. Fitzgerald, one of the prisoner's counsel, gave notice of appeal for a new trial in the Court of Queen's Bench, Manitoba. The appeal case was heard at Winnipeg on September 3 and 4, 1885, before Chief Justice Wallbridge and Mr. Justice T. W. Taylor.

M. Lemieux, chief counsel for Riel, raised the issue as to informality of the trial before the Specially Magistrate at Regina and contended the magistrate was incompetent to try the case.

Mr. Fitzpatrick followed. He held that the Treason-Felony Act was one of Imperial jurisdiction and he questioned if it had delegated any power to the colonial authorities to legislate away any rights enjoyed by the subjects of the British Empire. He dwelt strongly upon the insanity question and said that the jury were convinced of the prisoner's lunacy, hence their recommendation to mercy.

Mr. Ewart also strongly questioned the jurisdiction of the court at Regina and cited several authorities in support of his argument.

Mr. Robinson on behalf of the Crown, in an able address strongly combatted the idea that the court at Regina was not legally constituted and cited cases in support of his contention. He also dwelt at length on the insanity plea, showing the absurdity of the contention that Riel was insane.

Mr. Osler and Mr. Aikens followed on the same side, supplementing the arguments of the previous speaker as to the constitutionality of the court and cited a number of authorities adverse to the insanity plea.

At Winnipeg on Sept. 9, 1885, at a sitting of the full Court of the Queen's Bench of the Province of Manitoba, judgment was de-

livered in the appeal for a new trial for the prisoner Riel.

His Lordship Chief Justice Wallbridge first delivered judgment. He referred briefly to the facts brought before the court and the statutes by which the Stipendiary Magistrates are appointed in the Northwest and to the powers given them for the trial of the cases before them alone, and to the cases, including treason, which have to be tried before a magistrate with a justice of the peace and a jury of six. His Lordship held that the constitutionality of the court is established by the statutes passed, which he cited. If the act passed by the Dominion Parliament was, as claimed by the defence, *ultra vires*, it was clearly confirmed by the Imperial Act subsequently passed, which made the Dominion Act equal to an Imperial Act. The objections were to his mind purely technical and therefore not valid. His opinion, therefore, was that a new trial should be refused and the conviction of the Superior Court was therefore confirmed.

Mr. Justice Taylor followed, dealing fully with the arguments brought forward by the prisoner's counsel. On the question of the delegation of the power to legislate given the Dominion Parlia-

ment, he held that the Dominion Parliament has plenary powers on all subjects committed to it. He reviewed fully all the facts relating to the admission of Rupert's Land to the Dominion and to the statutes passed for the government of Rupert's Land and Manitoba when formed as a province. After a critical examination of the evidence in the case, he was unable to come to any other conclusion than that to which the jury had come. The evidence entirely fails to relieve the prisoner from responsibility for his acts. A new trial must be refused and the conviction must be confirmed.

Mr. Justice Killam next followed at some length, concurring in the views of his brother judges.

With these proceedings the trial of the rebel chief was concluded, though counsel for Riel has notified the executive that they will appeal the case to the Privy Council in England. Riel will, meantime, be respited.

Reprieve being granted till November 16, 1885, on which date he was executed at Regina.

#### LETTER FROM RIEL TO JUDGE RICHARDSON

His Honor Hugh Richardson,  
Judge, Regina.

Your Honor, — I thank you for having goodly postponed the ex-

execution of the sentence against me. I shall make use of those days, added to my life, so as to prepare better. And, if by God's mercy and favorable human decision, my life is to be spared, I will endeavor to render it more useful than it has been in the past. I pray to God that twenty-nine years be added to your life, in reward of the twenty-nine days which you have kindly consented to grant me.

My thanks to all those who have so generously contributed and worked to save me such a precious addition of my days; to you and to them all, my thanks, but the warmest of my thanks.

Very respectfully,

Your humble and obedient,

LOUIS DAVID RIEL.

Sept. 17, 1885,

Regina Jail.



D. W. Light

PROPERTY OF  
DOUGLAS W. LIGHT  
CALGARY, ALTA.

